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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-044 *5 March 1996*

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Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 27 Feb

NC0403094096

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 27 February edition of the Arabic language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Muslim Ulema Say New Child Law Compatible With Shari'ah
2. Claims Against 'AQIDATI Refuted
3. Awqaf Minister Views Status of Mosque Imams, Preachers
4. Plan To Close Private Mosques During Friday Prayers
5. Writer Defends 'AQIDATI at Cairo Book Fair
6. Secularists' Lion Share at Book Fair Seminars Criticized
7. Report on Westernization, Islamic Influence in Turkey
8. Awqaf Ministry Plans on Private Mosques, Preachers

MUSLIM ULEMA SAY NEW CHILD LAW COMPATIBLE WITH SHARI'AH

A 120-word unattributed report on page 1 says that Muslim ulema, sociologists, and thinkers have "asserted" that the new child law passed by the People's Assembly is "compatible with Islamic shari'ah."

The report adds that the ulema praised the cancellation of a clause stipulating the imprisonment of a married couple if they do not undergo medical tests. The ulema argued that a sound marriage requires the couple's consent in the presence of witnesses according to shari'ah and that medical examination cannot be a "general condition" to perfect a marriage.

The ulema said Islamic shari'ah defined the child's rights 14 centuries ago.

CLAIMS AGAINST 'AQIDATI REFUTED

A 300-word unattributed report on pages 1 and 15 says 'AQIDATI "did not escape slander" by guests of the Cairo book fair this year.

At a seminar, the report adds, Dr. Husam 'Isa, an international law professor, said 'AQIDATI has been an instrument of intellectual extremism even though it is issued by a national institution. He claimed that the newspaper ruled that prominent writer Najib Mahfuz was infidel and demanded that he and his wife be separated. But 'AQIDATI's representative at the seminar responded by saying this was "mere slander." The representative said 'AQIDATI conducted an "exclusive" interview with writer Mahfuz and gave him "ample opportunity to defend himself and his works."

AWQAF MINISTER VIEWS STATUS OF MOSQUE IMAMS, PREACHERS

In his regular front page column, Samir Rajab, 'AQIDATI's board chairman, says Awqaf Minister Dr. Mahmud Zaqzuq contacted him "explaining and confirming every word I said in this column last week."

In his 320-word column, Rajab says the awqaf minister "acknowledges" that mosque imams and preachers "are indeed below standard." Despite this, the minister notes, many ask persistently to change their profession, "seeking comfort and not wanting to face the masses, even though they receive salaries, gratuities, and double allowances."

During a discussion with him, the writer says, the awqaf minister said he would issue orders asking al-Azhar College graduates to practice preaching. This, the minister adds, is the only way to fill the intellectual vacuum in the mosques, "which inarguably caused the spread of false extremist calls."

PLAN TO CLOSE PRIVATE MOSQUES DURING FRIDAY PRAYERS

An approximately 350-word report on page 2 by Muhammad al-Abnudi cites statements by Awqaf Minister Dr. Mahmud Hamdi Zaqzuq on private mosques, imams, and preachers.

The report says the awqaf minister has asserted that "strict controls" will be devised to close all small private mosques during Friday prayers. The minister added that there is no way that these mosques can be reopened, "because they contribute to Muslims' dispersal and division" and because prayers in major mosques are better for meeting and cooperation among Muslims. He noted that the small private mosques will not be shut down. They will be designated for prayers only and will be used as fringe offices to memorize the Koran and give additional lessons to school and college students, he added.

The minister said 1,750 mosques have been annexed to the ministry in "recent days" and that papers for annexing 6,000 more are ready, pending financial allocations.

He said a letter had been sent to the manpower department to ask shari'ah college graduates since 1992 to make up the shortfall of mosque imams.

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WRITER DEFENDS 'AQIDATI AT CAIRO BOOK FAIR

A 500-word unattributed report on page 3 cites remarks made by journalist and writer Samir Rajab, chairman of the board of directors of the Dar al-Tahrir establishment, during a seminar held at the Cairo book fair.

Rajab responded to charges that 'AQIDATI "fuels religious extremism." He said the newspaper is one of "the tributaries of an enlightened Islamic trend that presents tolerant Islam in unique moderation." Rajab replied to a question about "some of the book fair's guests' accusations that 'AQIDATI is one of the sources that fuel religious extremism in Egypt." He said: "One of the main goals behind publishing 'AQIDATI is to combat all forms of extremism, present Islam in its tolerant image, and seriously and consciously confront Islam's enemies, who distort its image whether ignorantly or deliberately." He added that 'AQIDATI will not stop defending Islam and rectifying its "incorrect image" created by the reckless behavior of some of the religion's followers who claim they have a monopoly over Islam or the enemies of Islam.

SECULARISTS' LION SHARE AT BOOK FAIR SEMINARS CRITICIZED

Page 3 also features a 400-word report filed by Jamal Salim about this year's Cairo Book Fair. The report says that although the fair this year learned from past mistakes, which have been the object of complaints by both the readers and publishers, some mistakes persist. The report adds that "the secularists got the lion's share of cultural seminars, while the Islamists' participation was marginalized, causing these seminars to lose their necessary balance, resulting in criticism by visitors."

The author of the report says: "If we look at the cultural activities of the fair's seminars, we notice a bias toward the secularists at the expense of the Islamists and others."

REPORT ON WESTERNIZATION, ISLAMIC INFLUENCE IN TURKEY

In an approximately 450-word report on page 6, the author, Dr. Muhammad Ibrahim al-Fayyumi, views efforts to "Westernize" Turkey and the status of Islam in the country. He says: "No matter what dominates politically, it is difficult to change the nations' sentiments like state systems are changed. The sentiment of a nation is formed by national history and cultural and religious values and literature. This grows and prospers to build an independent and free nation with its own character and outlook."

He notes that the outcome of elections in "Turkey showed the "secular upsurge's retreat and the Islamic influence's growth." He concludes by saying that "secularism and advocates of Westernization have fallen into the Black Sea, where Marxism fell before."

AWQAF MINISTRY PLANS ON PRIVATE MOSQUES, PREACHERS

In a 280-word column on page 6, the writer, Basyuni al-Halawani, publishes a reply from Awqaf Minister Dr. Mahmud Zaqzuq in response to a previous article.

In his reply, the awqaf minister says that Law no. 157 of 1960 gives the Awqaf Ministry the right to supervise all private mosques until they are annexed to the ministry. He adds that the ministry has embarked on a plan to annex all private mosques, over 30,000 by the year 2000. The aim, he says, is to prevent "what the writer has cautioned against" — the infiltration by many extremist elements of "our private mosques" away from the Awqaf Ministry's watch and control.

He adds that the Awqaf Ministry is about to devise a plan to improve the standard of preachers "so that a mosque's pulpit can be a tool for genuine religious enlightenment, not a place to disseminate extremist ideas, distorted concept., false words, or myths."

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Declares 'State of Alert' To Face 'Criminal Act'

JN0403182096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat announced that the National Authority has adopted a systematic policy and measures after the criminal operation on 25 February, adding that the National Authority has been following up this policy and these measures on all levels. [passage omitted]

Asked what measures will be taken in the wake of these acts, President 'Arafat said: Yesterday, we announced a state of alert in all our agencies. We will cooperate to confront these criminal acts, which target both Israelis and Palestinians, as well as the peace process.

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Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Condemns Latest Bombing in Tel Aviv

JN0403181196 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1724 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Statement by Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian Authority, on 4 March; place not given; broadcast in progress — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] This is the time for work at all levels; it is not time for talking. We in the Authority have adopted a systematic policy and measures since the criminal operation on 25 February. We are following up this policy and measures at all levels. We believe that the remedy will be achieved in two stages: an immediate and swift one that we will implement within the framework of the Palestinian-Israeli relationship, and a second stage that requires a long-term and more comprehensive outlook among all the parties in the region. This serious type of terrorism has deep roots, and its leaders are moving freely around the region and the world.

Today's crime makes us more persistent and determined in our policy and approach to combating terrorism and the foreign and local powers behind it, as well as everything related to its infrastructure. We, as Palestinians and Israelis, should do our utmost to combat this terrorism and tear out its roots and its infrastructure.

Once again, I completely condemn this operation, just as I have condemned all these criminal operations and those behind them. I offer my condolences to the families of victims and the Israeli Government and people.

Palestinian Affairs: PA Said To Ask Hamas Leaders To Leave Territories

TA0403161996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense establishment sources say that so far the Palestinian security services in the Gaza Strip have not detained the heads of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] military arm, whose names were given to the Palestinian Authority [PA] by Israel. The security sources told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that they are looking into information according to which the PA proposed to the heads of the Hamas military arm that they go abroad so that it will not be forced to detain them.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Speaks to Reporters on New Security Measures

JN0403132796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1055 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Report by Hasan Abu-Zayid in Gaza; from the "With the Midday Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Pursuant to President 'Arafat's instructions, the Palestinian police arrested a number of activists belonging to some Islamic movements last night and today. Popular demonstrations and rallies were staged in Gaza today in protest against yesterday's operation and against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. A short time ago we met with the president of the Palestinian Authority and asked him about the steps taken by the PA.

[Begin recording] ['Arafat] As you know, we took several practical measures to ban the activity of all groups under various military names regardless of their affiliation. At the same time, we consider them outlawed and illegal. This is one point. The second point is that cooperation between us and the Israelis is under way to confront this violence and terrorism, which is not directed against the Israelis alone, but against the Israelis, Palestinians, and the peace process. It is directed against peace in the Middle East. Therefore, we need to cooperate and be stronger than terrorism and the terrorists. We need to be stronger than violence and those who practice it.

When we spoke about the peace of the brave, we were aware of the dimensions and difficulties of this peace. We need to entrench this peace not only between the Palestinians and the Israelis, the Jordanians and the Israelis, the Syrians and the Israelis, the Lebanese and the Israelis, or the Egyptians and the Israelis. We need to entrench peace in the Middle East, which will be a new Middle East in the full sense of the word, based on coexistence and the exchange of expertise in the areas of technology, economy, and everything else.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. President, how do you reassure the Palestinian people following yesterday's incident?

['Arafat] By urging them to exert greater persistent efforts to confront all those [terrorists].

[Correspondent] What is your comment about the stabbing of two settlers in Hebron?

['Arafat] I hope that we will not be driven by actions and reactions. [end recording]

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Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Responsibility for Blast Reported

JN0403164796 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1632 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A caller, who claimed to be from the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, contacted the enemy radio to claim the movement's responsibility for the operation. The caller said that martyr hero Salah 'Abd-al-Rahim Ishaq, age 24, from Ramallah, carried out the operation in the heart of the Tel Aviv settlement this evening.

Palestinian Affairs: Radio Lauds 'Jihad' Operations Against Israel

JN0403171296 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1100 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Commentary by "al-Quds Radio's special correspondent": "Another Sunday"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It was another Sunday, and it brought to the Zionists a flavor they must taste, a bitterness they must experience, and a test for the near future they must await.

The settlers had to know that the pure Palestinian blood that watered the soil of Dayr Yasin, did not go in vain and that the blood that watered the land of Qibyah, Nahhalin, the al-Aqsa Mosque, and the Ibrahimi Mosque was never cheaper than their filthy blood or their flesh, which has been fed on grudge and racism.

It was another Sunday that could cool the blood boiling inside the veins of Yahya 'Ayyash's mother, Ibrahim al-Shaqaqi's mother, and Hani 'Abid's relatives. There are other names that have lit the sky of Palestine. This light will illuminate the future our people are awaiting.

Did the settler who collected the pieces of flesh and the remnants of his colleagues from the scene of the latest jihad operation yesterday ask how this Polish, Romanian, Russian, British, or other flesh arrived in this land of Palestine and why it arrived? Did this Zionist ask himself: Why did the dead men whose remains he was collecting come from their birthplace to the land of another people, usurp this land, build settlements on it, expel its people, and kill them or render them homeless?

Did this Zionist ask himself: Where did the owners of these lands and properties, which bus No. 18 passed through, go before the bus' passengers met their fate? We, however, know that this Zionist did not, and will not, ask himself such questions, because he wants the whirlpool of violence and death to continue. Has this Zionist not kindled war and crime and insist on continuing them to the end, even if the whole world is set ablaze and even if all the lands, rights, and resources of others are usurped and even if the refugees and displaced persons are rendered homeless throughout the world so he can live as he pleases amid the remains of bodies and the smell of blood?

We also know that this Zionist used to think that the bodies torn to pieces would only be the bodies of Palestinians. It did not occur to this Zionist that our people would refuse to die, reject the usurpation of their rights, and refuse to turn into mere bodies scattered away from their own land.

It did not occur to this Zionist that our people would reject submission, capitulation, and humiliation, and that our people would avenge their rights, land, themselves, and their righteous martyrs. We are pained when a martyr or a wounded man among us falls. However, one of two good things must be won: either freedom in the homeland or paradise.

On the other side, the Israelis are also pained, but they have only one option: suffering and fire in daily life and suffering and fire in the hereafter. They have no other way.

Palestinian Affairs: Attack Said Due to Peres 'Declaration of War'

TA0403171996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1640 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Talk between moderator Goni Mardor and Arab affairs correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem — live, in the studio]

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem is in the studio now. You talked with the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spokesman, didn't you?

[Ben-Menahem] Well, Goni, a few minutes ago a man who identified himself as the Hamas spokesman called us. He spoke in Arabic. He waited patiently until I entered the studio to interview him. We held an interview in Arabic that lasted about three minutes. Let's hear a short excerpt of the interview, and then, since the interview was long, I will translate and talk about the content of the interview.

[Begin unidentified Hamas spokesman recording, in Arabic] Let me directly address Prime Minister and Defense Minister Shim'on Peres after he warned us and declared war on Hamas. We will continue to deliver hard blows....

[Mardor, interrupting the recording] Yoni, perhaps you should translate for those who do not understand Arabic.

[Ben-Menahem] Alright, let us do so. This spokesman, who refused to identify himself, only said he was

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a Hamas member and that they perpetrated today's terrorist attack in reaction to Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' declaration of war on Hamas yesterday.

I asked him why they carried out the attack; after all, in their leaflet yesterday they promised that the Jerusalem attack would be the last of a series of attacks intended to revenge the liquidation of Yahya 'Ayyash. He repeated that Hamas did this because Peres declared war against on that organization. Later, he made an appeal to the Israeli Government, asking that in its special session this evening that the government not adopt anti-Hamas measures since if it does, so he asserted, Hamas will continue to strike at the Jewish state, and attacks will continue....

[Mardor, interrupting] He is threatening us then.

[Ben-Menahem] Yes. I asked him which group was behind the attacks, as the Israeli public wants to know whether they are the new disciples of Yahya 'Ayyash, the group which named itself so. He refused to say, stating that Hamas was perpetrating the attacks in cooperation with the Islamic Jihad organization. This is a new thing we have not heard to date. Later he said that the terrorist who carried out today's attack on Dizengoff Street is Islamic Jihad, not Hamas. At the end of this long interview, which I have just summarized, he refused to continue to interview and hung up.

[Mardor] Yoni Ben-Menahem, thank you very much for this.

Palestinian Affairs: PA's Sha'th Condemns Tel Aviv Bombing

JN0403165096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1540 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Nabil Sha'th, official in charge of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian Authority, by Hasan Abu-Zayid in the Jerusalem studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Sha'th] No phrases are enough to condemn or denounce this grisly crime, which comes on the heels of other horrible crimes. Indeed, there seems to be a planned drive to destroy the peace process and the nascent relationship between the Palestinians and the Israelis — a relationship that seeks a genuine and just peace in this region. Therefore, we all have to work together and cooperate against this barbaric drive and put an end to these operations. Although it is not enough, we should implore God that we will not see such crimes in the future and that this will be the last horrible incident.

[Abu-Zayid] What do you think the solution to these phenomena, which have increased, is? There were three criminal incidents this week?

[Sha'th] I hope the solution will not lie in arousing enmities and accusing each other as we face those who we know seek to destroy us all. Last week, there was an attempt to accuse the Palestinian Authority [PA] of failure and blame it for these things. I should say that I know all the reasons, the justifications, pain, and suffering. What is required is that the Palestinian Authority should cooperate with the Israeli Government at all levels to confront these crimes.

Today, we made it clear that there is popular Palestinian support for the Palestinian Authority in all its efforts to confront any attempt of this kind. We heard President Yasir 'Arafat's speech yesterday, and we have also seen the new measures taken by the PA to collect and confiscate any weapons and punish anyone who takes part in or plans such operations. However, all of this is not enough. We must cooperate in planning and implementation so that we will foil these operations and build a joint relationship where the Palestinians and Israelis have an interest in facing any such criminal operations.

[Abu-Zayid] Do you want to address those who send suicide attackers to kill innocents and civilians?

[Sha'th] I say to them: You make no distinction between struggle and criminal killing. Once we struggled with each other and called everyone to fight against the occupation when there was war and fighting. Now, as we are building a common peace, killing is considered neither struggle nor jihad. Killing, in this case, is a criminal act. This is the difference between one who pulls the trigger to kill an innocent person and one who pulls the trigger to defend himself and his homeland. These explosions are criminal and a means of killing our sons, our future, peace, and all that we have struggled for over many long years. Stop this and change immediately so that we can build together, or else all that we have worked for will be lost.

[Abu-Zayid] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, thank you very much.

Palestinian Affairs: Kanafani—'Arafat 'Very Angry' Over Tel Aviv Blast

JN0403170296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1555 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] Legislative Council member Marwan Kanafani denounced the explosion that occurred in Tel Aviv today in which tens of Israelis were

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killed or wounded. Kanafani added: I believe that President Yasir 'Arafat is very angry.

He noted that innocent people should not be punished collectively. Kanafani called for an urgent meeting of all the concerned parties to discuss a quick and appropriate response to stop such actions, stressing that this is a regional problem.

Kanafani expressed his deep regret over what had happened. He said that the peace process is in danger.

Kanafani extended condolences to the bereaved families and the Israeli Government and wished the wounded a speedy recovery. He pointed out that this is a declaration of war, and must be dealt with as such.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Adviser Abu-Rudaynah Condemns Tel Aviv Bombing

JN0403174196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1643 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, by Hasan Abu-Zayid; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Abu-Rudaynah] You know that President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], the Palestinian National Authority, and the PLO have strongly condemned such operations, which harm the interests of the Palestinian people and the future of the peace process. We in the PLO have signed an agreement with the Government of the State of Israel in the name of the Palestinian people. We believe that the extremists are harming the peace process and the interests of the Palestinian people. Once again, we say that extremists from both sides: those who placed explosives in Tel Aviv and those who assassinated our partner in the peace process, Prime Minister Rabin, are trying to undermine the peace process.

[Abu-Zayid] This is the third incident in a week.

[Abu-Rudaynah] This wave of bomb attacks is abnormal and suspect and does not carry any Palestinian or local fingerprints. The questions are: Where did they get the explosives? Who is behind these operations? Why are these operations taking place now? It is clear that foreign parties who want to tamper with the peace process are involved. Extremists from both sides are influenced by foreign parties.

[Abu-Zayid] How did President Yasir 'Arafat respond when he learned about the Tel Aviv incident?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As I told you, President Abu-'Ammar delivered a speech last night condemning the incidents and explaining his official position. In an address to the Palestinian people, the Arab nation, and the international community, he explained the view of the PLO and the authority. He said we are against such operations, and we do not accept them in any way. An official statement will be issued soon in the name of President Yasir 'Arafat regarding today's incident.

[Abu-Zayid] Dr. Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to the president of the Palestinian Authority, thank you.

[Abu-Rudaynah] Thank you, Brother Hasan.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat on Curbing Groups, Cooperation With Israel

JN0403212296 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat made the following statement to the world media:

[Begin recording] ['Arafat, in progress] ...practical steps to curb the activity of all these military groups, regardless of their affiliation. At the same time, we consider them outlaws and illegitimate. This is one point.

The other point is: Cooperation between us and the Israelis to confront the violence and terrorism, which are not only against the Israelis, but also against the Palestinians and the peace process. They are also against peace in the Middle East.

We should cooperate and be stronger than terrorism and the terrorists and also stronger than violence and those who carry out violence.

When we talked about the peace of the brave, we were aware of the dimensions and difficulty of entrenching such peace — not only between the Palestinians and the Israelis, or between the Jordanians and the Israelis, or between the Syrians and the Israelis, or between the Lebanese or the Egyptians and the Israelis — but also in the Middle East, so that it will be a new Middle East, in the full sense of the word. Such a Middle East will be based on coexistence and the exchange of experience, technology, economy, and everything else.

[Unidentified correspondent] Your Excellency, how will you assure the Palestinians in the street about the events that occurred yesterday?

['Arafat] More persistent work is needed to confront all these groups.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, what is your comment on the stabbing of two settlers in Hebron?

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['Arafat] I hope we will not be dragged into action and counteraction. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: PNA Minister Frayj Urges 'End to This Bloodbath'

BR0403133596 Rome L'UNITA in Italian 4 Mar 96 p 3

[Interview with Ilyas Frayj, Bethlehem mayor and "a Palestinian National Authority minister," by Umberto de Giovannangeli in Bethlehem on 3 March: "Mayor Frayj: 'Jews, Our Brothers'" — first paragraph is L'UNITA introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Political condemnations are no longer enough. We Palestinians have to find the strength and the courage to call an end to this bloodbath, expelling these criminals from our national tissue. We have the right and the duty to do so, before it is too late." The voice of Elias Frayj, mayor of Bethlehem and a minister in the National Palestinian Authority, was broken with grief. "Only two months ago, right here in Bethlehem, we celebrated the Palestinian people's firt Christmas in freedom," he recalled. "A hope of peace was born that day that a group of bloodthirsty fanatics is now killing."

[De Giovannangeli] Another Sunday of bloodshed in Jerusalem. What is behind this escalation in terrorism?

[Frayj] First of all, there is a battle for supremacy inside Hamas and its armed wing, Izz-al-Din al-Qassam [Battalions]. A hard-fought clash over the political and operational direction taken by the movement has been underway for months in the fundamentalists' ranks, a clash that was openly revealed during the 20 January elections as well. The more extremist wing of Hamas is carrying out this hail of attacks in an attempt to take over leadership of the movement by getting the more pragmatic component, which embarked on dialogue with 'Arafat some time ago, with its back against the wall. There is room for this latter component in Palestine, but not for the criminals who devised this strategy. What is more, these massacres have turned the "hawks" of Hamas into an issue in the Israeli election campaign, fueling the climate of fear and insecurity that can contribute to a win for the Jewish Right.

[De Giovannangeli] A split between the leaders inside Hamas and those outside it has emerged on several occasions recently.

[Frayj] It is another sign of the showdown taking place in the organization. The Hamas leaders who live in Gaza and the West Bank know full well that the terrorist option was defeated some time ago and that their future is bound up with their ability to take their place in an open, democratic society that refuses to submit to the abuses perpetrated by a minority, albeit a belligerent one. The outside leaders, however, are more radical because they are more susceptible to blackmail by those who use them to back their own ambitions for power in the region. I refer, in particular, to countries, such as Iran and even Syria, who do not hesitate to play the cynical terrorist card to enhance their influence in the Middle East.

[De Giovannangeli] How can this spiral of bloodshed be broken?

[Frayj] Exceptional measures are obviously needed, and they cannot be postponed any longer. The hawks of Hamas have challenged the Palestinian Authority as well, not just Israel. They are turning back the clock of history with their criminal deeds, wiping out the positive achievements of the last three years. We must outlaw the armed fundamentalist groups if we want to avert disaster. I am sure that the vast majority of Palestinians will understand and support the decisions that President 'Arafat is adopting to this effect, because it is mostly the thousands of Palestinian families in Gaza and the West Bank, whose existence depends on their work in Israel, who are suffering the consequences of the terrorist attacks. Sealing the territories off is tantamount to condemning them to a slow death. The protection or conspiracy of silence from which these enemies of the Palestinian people have benefited must be shattered. No one must fail in the duty to report the instigators and perpetrators of these massacres, revealing their hideouts and cooperating with the Israeli authorities to put an end to their campaign.

[De Giovannangeli] Is there still room for dialogue in this war scenario?

[Frayj] There has to be. We must do everything within our power to ensure that there is. What is needed at the present time is a moral revolt by the Palestinians, a new intifada, conducted this time to free ourselves of the moral blackmail practised by an extremist minority. We have to show the Israeli people without any shadow of doubt that its grief is our grief, that its anger is our anger, because we have a common enemy to defeat: those who want to continue along the road of hatred and bloodshed.

Palestinian Affairs: Israel Said 'Systematically Violating' Oslo Accord

BR0503103696 Milan IL FOGLIO in Italian 5 Mar 96 p 3

[Unattributed report on interview with Palestinian Legislative Council member Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi by

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unidentified correspondent in Jerusalem; date not given: "Hamas and Jihad, Strong Powers Against 'Arafat's Peace"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jerusalem — Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the man who led the PLO delegation in the first peace talks with Israel in Madrid and who today has a seat on 'Arafat's Council [as published], told IL FOGLIO: "We condemn the increase in violence, but the Palestinians' impatience over the absence of a real peace is high. Israel is systematically violating the Oslo accord." According to 'Abd-al-Shafi, the Palestinian Authority should turn the tension created by terrorism to its own advantage. "Indeed it should have done so a long time ago." This is the mood prevailing in the least extremist Palestinian circles. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Adviser on Anti-Israel Attacks, Hamas

NC0403211596 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1855 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to Palestinian President 'Arafat, in Gaza by Shadyah Riyad in Cairo; date not given; from the "Talking Newspaper" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Riyad] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is continuing in the same way its attacks and suicide operations against civilians in Israel. Of course, this has prompted an overwhelming wave of anger and denunciation, not only inside Israel but also at regional and world levels. These suicide operations caused numerous problems and entailed serious ramifications which, as you know, if not contained, will drag the region to catastrophes no one but God can predict. In your opinion, how can we overcome this crisis and emerge from this situation?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As you know, yesterday evening, President Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat] delivered a political speech in which he defined the features of the upcoming phase. Before that, a statement was issued by the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] banning the activities of all paramilitary organizations of all inclinations. The statement said that from now on, the PNA will not tolerate a double authority, that it will not allow the violation of Palestinian security, and that it will not allow the use of National Authority territories for any activity affecting the PLO's commitments.

As you know, there is an agreement signed between the PLO and the Israeli Government and there is a phased solution agreed upon in the Madrid peace conference. We have covered noticeable steps. Gaza and Jericho have been liberated and six Palestinian cities have been completely liberated. We are awaiting the handover and liberation of Hebron on the 27th of this month.

There are major Palestinian accomplishments that we will allow no one to violate. We are working hard to establish a national authority over all the PNA and Palestinian territories and to set up an independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem its capital. The PNA achievements are being made in line with what has been agreed upon.

There are some Israeli punishments, obstacles, and difficulties which are still in place. They are not negligible punishments. However, we tell everyone that we must work together to build this homeland. No faction has the right to impose its view and hamper the achievement of Palestinian ambitions and dreams.

[Riyad] You just mentioned the achievements made by the Palestinian side, in the peace process, toward realizing the Palestinian dream. But it is clear that Hamas insists on wrecking the peace process. Has Hamas offered an alternative to the peace process?

[Abu-Rudaynah] First of all, I would like to emphasize that statements have been released in the PNA territories announcing that they do not bear responsibility for what happened. As is obvious now, there are parties outside PNA territories wanting to tamper with Palestinian security. The brothers in Hamas inside the PNA territories, specifically in Gaza, announced that they have no connection with and bear no responsibility for what happened.

There are parties with foreign links, Arab and non-Arab .....[changes thought] As we said earlier there is awareness and realization on the part of many brothers in Hamas, because Palestinian national interest requires extreme caution and balanced and sound ties with the PNA.

[Riyad] Mr. Abu-Rudaynah, let us go back to the Israeli reaction. Shim'on Peres said that there are no peace negotiations at present with the Palestinians, but demands on our part. He spelled out these demands as three conditions: that Hamas and al-Jihad be outlawed, the disarmament of the Palestinian organizations, and the arrest of the terrorist organizations' leaders. In your view, what is the extent of the response to these demands?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As I told you, there is an agreement signed by the PLO and the Israeli government. There are Palestinian obligations, rights, and duties. We signed an agreement and are bound by it. We call on Israel to abide by what it signed and respect the agreements signed in Cairo and Washington. As to some of the Israeli demands, we wish to stress that what binds us is a signed

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agreement witnessed by international figures. There are no Palestinian demands nor responses to Israeli ones. What we say is that we are bound together by a signed agreement. We are committed to and respect what we have signed.

[Riyad] But some in Israel are demanding the Israeli Army's intervention and entry into the self-rule areas to chase the suspects and control the situation as they say.

[Abu-Rudaynah] First, we do not accept and refuse absolutely any Israeli attack on Palestinian sovereignty. We condemned this in the past and will not allow a repetition. That would be a violation of the peace agreements. These steps and measures will not facilitate the peace process. The peace required should be a just and comprehensive one, where the parties' respect each other, and treat each other as equals. We will not accept these violations. If they do so, they will be violating the agreement and threatening the entire peace process.

[Riyad] What about the measures already taken by the Israeli cabinet yesterday, the declaration of war on Hamas, the decision to separate Palestinians and Israelis, and the policy of collective punishment against the Palestinian people?

[Abu-Rudaynah] We do not accept these Israeli measures and consider them obstacles to the peace process. But we have to remember that they had to face difficult events in the past few days and will have elections in the coming few months. In principle, we say that the closure and the Israeli collective punishment will not facilitate the peace process but, on the contrary, will facilitate and create the right climate for extremists on both sides to operate in this unhealthy climate. We call on the Israeli government to release the detainees, specially the women, according to the agreement. We call on it to reopen the crossing points and not to impose or tighten the siege on Gaza. There is only one solution, namely the implementation of the signed agreements. Comprehensive and just peace will not be achieved unless peace is achieved for both sides. On this occasion, if by talking about separation they mean political separation, then we are ready for it. But security separation means collective punishment. We welcome political separation and are ready to enter into direct and immediate negotiations on the need to reach satisfactory results about the final stage and draw up the political separation between Palestine and Israel.

[Riyad] There are at present efforts and contacts to contain and overcome the repercussions of recent events. Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first foreign ministry under secretary and director of the president's office for political affairs, visited Israel and the self-rule area yesterday. What is required from Egypt at this stage to help overcome these repercussions?

[Abu-Rudaynah] There have in fact been constant Egyptian efforts, that is since we embarked on the peace process, which backed and supported the Palestinian people's demands. As you know, President Mubarak and President Abu-'Ammar met before for a few days, during which the latter briefed President Mubarak on the developments and existing problems and they discussed Egypt's constant role in finding solutions to these problems. Dr. al-Baz also visited us and carried a message from President Abu-'Ammar to President Mubarak. As I said, there has been a constant Egyptian role and backing for the Palestinian rights. There is a very clear national and pan-Arab stand. Egypt backs the Palestinian issue and we praise this backing and these strong stands. We are under a complete siege and closure. There are Egyptian measures to alleviate this siege. Some food will reach Gaza from Egypt in the coming few days. There are Egyptian efforts and aid and there are actions to find a solution to this crisis. There are also Egyptian efforts with the Israeli government to find solutions to the present crisis.

[Riyad] Thank you Mr. Abu-Rudaynah, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's adviser.

[Abu-Rudaynah] Thank you.

Palestinian Affairs: Bombings Blamed for 'Crises' in National Development

JN0403220096 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1936 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Commentary by Hasan al-Kashif: "The Shrapnel of the Explosion Hits Our Life"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We stand on common ground. All of us, as citizens and officials, face similar conditions. It goes without saying that progress toward putting our house in order has been impeded. Developments, not dialogue, have prompted us to have these convictions. Now we have a new explosion, the shrapnel of which affects all aspects of our political and economic life and day-to-day matters, not just the Palestinian Authority's relations with the Israeli side. What are we supposed to do? And what questions should we ask ourselves, as Palestinians?

We demand pluralism, democracy, and supremacy of the laws of civilized society. Achieving these just and legitimate rights requires political and security stability. It also requires an absence of extraordinary conditions. Every time we move toward the beginning of stability, as was the case over the past six months, an incident

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takes place, thus disrupting the atmosphere conducive to organizing our political life.

We demand the authority to resolve the dilemma of our economic situation and rectify the imbalance in the economic agreement in a manner that will ensure a stable market capable of growth and an organized flow of goods and services. This should lead to stability in prices, which should be commensurate with the average income and acceptable to the merchant, producer, importer, and exporter. Experience over time is enough to diagnose the loopholes and to determine what we want and the means to reach neighboring markets. As we take strides to rectify the situation, an explosion takes place, thus confusing our economic life and creating a crisis. This way, we become mainly preoccupied with ridding ourselves of the choking crisis, and nothing else.

We demand the authority to build the most crucial establishments and to rethink some of the work procedures in light of some visible negative points in the performance of state agencies. Rethinking requires calm, stability, and peace of mind away from the noise of crises. This will enable us to complete the task of laying down the foundations of the authority in the West Bank cities and territories. Every time we make progress, we are hit by the fragments of an explosion, after which possibilities that we cannot cope with emerge.

I can talk forever about the legitimate and pressing demands. We have the will and the capability to meet these demands, if not for these incidents that surprise and confuse us, impose new crises, confuse our lives and relations, and cause tension. Given that the explosion affects all aspects of our lives, we cannot be impartial toward what is going on, especially since the perpetrators carry out their bombings in consultation with members of the national ranks, both opponents and proponents. Therefore, all members of the national ranks are required, in relation to what is happening, to firmly stop this trend that causes all the crises and confusion. Nobody, under any circumstances, has the right to dominate our lives, relations, stability, and future like this. We have not authorized this party to run our life. Our national task is to besiege this party and question it. If it does not respond to the laws alongside the rest of national forces, it will be isolated — given its mentality — according to our decision. We have no other option. We are left with no other option.

Palestinian Affairs: Security Chief Describes Measures Against Militants

TA0403202996 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1940 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Rashid Abu-Shubayk, deputy head of the Palestinian Preventive Security Service, by Mikha Friedman — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Friedman] Good evening to you, Rashid Abu-Shubayk. We want to know what the Palestinian security forces are doing in their struggle against Islamic terrorism?

[Abu-Shubayk] We are in a state of emergency. We call on all wanted persons to turn themselves over to the Palestinian authorities, otherwise we will take severe steps against them.

[Friedman] Is there any deadline for this?

[Abu-Shubayk] They should turn themselves in today or tonight. Whoever fails to do so will be on the wanted list and we will act against them at any moment. We are in a high state of emergency.

[Friedman] Mr. Abu-Shubayk, who are these wanted people?

[Abu-Shubayk] All the wanted men on our list.

[Friedman] Are you referring only to terrorists or to the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] political leadership as well?

[Abu-Shubayk] To the terrorists as well as to Hamas and Islamic Jihad leaders who are involved in illegal acts.

[Friedman] How many people are on your list?

[Abu-Shubayk] There are many names on the list, but I cannot say precisely.

[Friedman] Roughly speaking, are there dozens, hundreds, or thousands?

[Abu-Shubayk] The list is extremely long. We have a certain order of priorities; we will deal first with those who are more dangerous.

[Friedman] Tell me, are there some people who have already heeded your call and turned themselves over to the authorities?

[Abu-Shubayk] There are some who have done so, but not very important people.

[Friedman] This means that the leaders and the important activists have still not heeded your call?

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[Abu-Shubayk] We are carrying out thorough searches for them.

[Friedman] Do you know where to locate them?

[Abu-Shubayk] With the help of our intelligence we are doing our best to locate each of them. Right now we are more serious than we have been up to this point.

[Friedman] Are you referring only to the Gaza Strip, or to the other autonomy areas in Judaea and Samaria as well?

[Abu-Shubayk] We are talking here of all the territories.

[Friedman] Have you received any warning regarding the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] intention to enter the Gaza Strip to carry out arrests and other operations?

[Abu-Shubayk] I do not think this is a logical possibility; it will only complicate the situation.

[Friedman] Did you hear anything about this possibility?

[Abu-Shubayk] Yes, there is such talk, but I hope that this will not happen, because it will only complicate the situation. It will not be a nice thing at all.

[Friedman] What course of action do you have? Will you use firearms against these wanted people?

[Abu-Shubayk] Yes, we will even use firearms.

[Friedman] Will you act against Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and all the organizations that Yasir 'Arafat mentioned this morning?

[Abu-Shubayk] Yasir 'Arafat's orders are absolutely clear — namely, arrest all those who violated the law according to Yasir 'Arafat's orders.

[Friedman] What will you do with the people you arrest?

[Abu-Shubayk] We will deal with each one according to the charges against him. They will be tried in court.

[Friedman] Will they receive heavy sentences?

[Abu-Shubayk] Heavy or light, each one according to the violations he committed. We will let everybody know that there is one authority and one law, and everybody must obey this law.

[Friedman] Does this mean that you intend to incarcerate all the shaykhs, imams, terrorists, and the activists on the ground?

[Abu-Shubayk] God willing, I hope this will happen.

Palestinian Affairs: PLO Spokesman on Israeli Security Announcement

LD0503111296 London BBC Television Network in English 2230 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Marwan Kanafani, spokesman for PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, by correspondent Jeremy Paxman; from the "Newsnight" program — live]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mr. Kanafani, how worried are you by the security initiatives announced by the Israeli Government this evening?

[Kanafani] Very worried. You know, we think that this is a decision that should not be taken. We think that if it is executed it could escalate the situation to war standards, [rather] than what we are facing today. I think that the Israelis should not act with impunity on any of the territories that are under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority. I really doubt, very much, even with Mr. Dromi's machismo, torn about the ability of the Israeli security forces. I believe that the only solution cannot be achieved by the Palestinian security forces alone, or the Israeli security forces alone. It should be implemented by both forces, because we cannot fight terrorism by individual acts...

[Paxman, interrupting] Mr. Kanafani, you have demonstrably failed to fight terrorism yourselves. We know where these suicide bombers are coming from, they are coming from areas under your control. Now, in those circumstances...

[Kanafani, interrupting] Well, we do not know that. That is not true. We do not know that. You know, if you say we failed, yes we both failed. We both were caught with our pants down, the Israelis and the Palestinians. This episode of violence started with the assassination of the prime minister, it started with the bombing that took place last Sunday until today. This is very regrettable, we, the president, President Yasir 'Arafat, conveyed his condolences and showed his anger at what happened. We have to sort this problem together, not against each other.

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Palestinian Affairs: Security Chief Views Hamas Terrorism

AU0403144396 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 4 Mar 96 p 158

[Interview with Palestinian Security Chief Nasr Yusif by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given: "Stop Terrorism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [DER SPIEGEL] General, do you know how many members belong to the armed wing of Hamas?

[Yusif] The Kasim brigades are a secret organization; it is not known how it works. The danger of them is that they operate in extreme secrecy, rather than in their number.

[DER SPIEGEL] 'Arafat has said that he not only condemns terrorism, but also the forces that are behind it. Whom does he mean by that?

[Yusif] Behind the organization there are individual states...

[DER SPIEGEL] ... such as Iran and Sudan?

[Yusif] I do not want to say that here. At any rate, the vast majority of Palestinians do not want to have anything to do with these people. This also became evident in the elections.

[DER SPIEGEL] How many people do you have to combat terrorism?

[Yusif] There are 2,300 policemen in Gaza and the West Bank.

[DER SPIEGEL] Israeli Prime Minister Peres now demands that not only the armed arm of Hamas be persecuted, but that the civilian infrastructure of the organization be smashed, too.

[Yusif] We will do everything to achieve that. An end must be put to extremism.

[DER SPIEGEL] First the Kasim brigades dissociated themselves from the latest attacks, then they claimed responsibility for them. How do you interpret this contradiction?

[Yusif] Both statements are authentic. The letter claiming responsibility comes from the Palestinians in exile, while the leaflet with the dissociation comes from Hamas representatives in the autonomous territories.

[DER SPIEGEL] Does this mean that Hamas is already split?

[Yusif] There are considerable differences of opinion within the organization. Those who live here in Palestine understand far better what the peace process really means for our people. With the Hamas people in exile it plays a great role, so that they closely cooperate with Palestinian groups that reject the peace process in general.

[DER SPIEGEL] Which Hamas group is in the majority?

[Yusif] The friends of peace in Hamas are probably in the majority here. However, the Hamas people in exile have far more money. Therefore, they can also operate more effectively.

[DER SPIEGEL] As far as we know, the suicide murderers came from the vicinity of Hebron. Thus, the organization has effective logistics at least in the West Bank.

[Yusif] The problem is that the cells are very small and operate extremely covertly. They are still successful, but this must not continue. We concluded a peace agreement with the Israelis and we are very keen on fulfilling above all the security agreements. That is the most important element in the whole peace process. We have to cope with terrorism; otherwise there will never be peace.

[DER SPIEGEL] 'Arafat announced that all unauthorized weapons should be surrendered by 1 March. Will you be searching the refugee camps?

[Yusif] We began that as early as last April. Now that the Israelis have withdrawn from most towns of the West Bank, we will also be losing no time in punishing any illegal possession of arms there.

[DER SPIEGEL] How many weapons have you confiscated so far?

Palestinian Affairs: PLO's Franji Views Peace Process Following Attacks

AU0503111596 Cologne Deutschlandfunk Network in German 0653 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with PLO representative in Germany 'Abdallah Franji in Gaza by Peter Kapern in the Cologne studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Kapern] Good morning, Mr. Franji.

[Franji] Good morning, Mr. Kapern.

[Kapern] Mr. Franji, four bomb attacks in nine days. Is there still a peace process?

[Franji] There is still a peace process, and there is a certain determination to continue this peace process. We are resolved to work for peace in a way allowing us to eventually prevent such actions some day. I think the statements of all politicians in the world, above all of

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President Clinton yesterday, have shown that the United States is resolved to help the Israelis and the Palestinians combat terror.

[Kapern] You said the PLO wants eventually to be in a position to prevent such actions. We are asking ourselves whether the people in Israel can consider it sufficient that this will eventually be the case.

[Franji] No, I think it just is not fair to hold the Palestinians — Yasir 'Arafat and the Palestinian Authority — responsible for these attacks. I think it would be foolish to hold 'Arafat alone responsible. Considering the recent actions, which we have strongly condemned, we see that they were carried out even though the borders of Gaza and the West Bank were sealed off. In other words, it is not only up to the Palestinians to combat these things. It is also up to the Israeli security organs to act.

[Kapern] Nonetheless, Mr. Franji. 'Arafat and the PLO have been accused time and again of hesitating to combat Hamas, and yesterday [4 March] a spokesman for PLO chief 'Arafat said that the extremist groups would now be combated by all possible means. Why only now?

[Franji] We fought them by the means that were possible in the past. We fought them by political means, and we have imprisoned the whole leadership. There is also a major split within Hamas. Some people, youths, have gone underground from where they carry out actions to prevent the Hamas leadership, which is ready — at least in the Gaza Strip — to accept us and to discontinue its military activities, from joining us. They published two communiquis to this effect on 4 and 3 March. But the split within the Hamas movement is obvious, and the extremists within Hamas carry out terrorist attacks from underground to prevent Hamas from adopting our policy.

[Kapern] In addition to the recent communiquis, can any new steps be expected of 'Arafat to prevent the Hamas terror?

[Franji] New steps? We arrested over 300 Hamas members in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank until yesterday, and we have passed all information that our security organs have obtained to the Israeli organs. We are also ready to cooperate with the Israelis. I think this is the only way for us to share responsibility with the Israelis. However, I think it would be very unwise to hold 'Arafat alone responsible for the situation. Nor would it be correct to act alone. Acting alone would lead to success of the terrorists. They would reach their goal to split and separate the two partners in this peace process — the Israeli and Palestinian partners. I think we should be very careful. I note a certain nervousness in Israel, and we understand the reactions in Israel. But if the wrong decision is made now, peace will in fact be endangered.

[Kapern] Talking about the wrong decision, do you mean by this the decision made by the Israeli Government last night [4 March] to set up a special unit that could also act in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank to combat Hamas?

[Franji] That is precisely what I mean. As long as the Palestinians are ready to cooperate with the Israelis in combating terror in the territories, this offer should be accepted, and the Palestinians should be treated as partners. If they fail to do so, if they are trying to operate alone in our territories, this will increase the tensions, and the Palestinians' pride will be hurt, and they will certainly increasingly turn to those radicals that already have a certain influence in the occupied territories. If the Palestinians and the Israelis accept joint responsibility for the occupied territories — the territories that are not under 'Arafat's control — if we do not find a common denominator, the Israelis and ourselves, and if our security organs are unable to find joint answers and are unable to operate jointly, a certain vacuum will develop that the extremists will try to exploit for their terrorist purposes.

[Kapern] Thank you very much, Mr. Franji.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Zahhar Warns PA To Stop 'Harsh' Treatment of Hamas

TA0503120896 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1137 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Jamil Hamami, one of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leaders on the West Bank, has appealed to Hamas' military wing to conduct negotiations with Israel through the Palestinian Authority [PA], saying that today the PA is the official address for negotiations with Israel. In contrast, another Hamas leader, Mahmud al-Zahhar, has warned Israel about continued terrorist acts. Following is an excerpt of his remarks.

[Begin al-Zahhar recording in English; broadcast in progress] ...demanding the military wings of 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam and the followers of the martyr Yahya 'Ayyash to stop all the military actions at this moment till we reach with this point to the demand of all the Palestinian rights. At this moment, we are calling the Palestinian Authority to release all the Hamas and Jihad people under detention immediately, and to stop all the harsh management concerning these organizations, and

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to start how to organize our relation on a solid basis to decrease the tension, and to stop all the possibilities of confrontation, and to cut the hands of our enemy that are playing in our future.

I actually warning the Israeli side: If they are going to commit any crime against any of the Palestinians, particularly Hamas people, this will harden our effort and may cancel all our efforts that hoping to decrease the tension at this moment in this area. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Zahhar Denies Connection With Hamas Military Wing

JN0503072096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The political wing of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement called on the movement's military wing to stop the suicide operations against Israeli targets. Two Hamas leaders, Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar and Muhammad Sham'ah, held a news conference last night in which they said they hope that the military wing will respond to their call.

Al-Zahhar affirmed that the Hamas Movement's political wing has nothing to do with the operations or with the decisions on these operations. He added that out of its awareness of the political, economic, and security developments, the political wing calls on the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Battalions and the Yahya 'Ayyash Disciples to stop the suicide operations. Al-Zahhar said the Hamas movement is ready to jointly work with all forces to enhance national unity.

Palestinian Affairs: PNA Ban on Hamas Will Only Have 'Symbolic Effect'

LD0303112396 Tehran IRNA in English 1034 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Athens, March 3, IRNA — Palestine Authority Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has banned Hamas' [Islamic Resistance Movement] military wing, the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam brigades, within the Palestinian autonomous enclaves, said a dispatch from Qods.

'Arafat has also ordered armoured personnel carriers into the streets of Gaza.

Speaking in a press conference in Gaza Sunday morning, 'Arafat described today's bus-bombing in Qods (Jerusalem) as "very serious, very dangerous and very awful."

He said the attack was directed "not only against the Israelis, but against the Palestinians, the Israelis and the peace process."

"I condemn it very strongly, and we will take serious steps against the persons and group behind this crime, whether they be the Black Panther group (pro-Fatah), al-Nisr al-Ahmar (the Red Eagle, pro-PFLP [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine]), or 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam," said 'Arafat.

A man phoned the Israeli radio and said the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam brigades carried out Sunday's bombing which killed 20 Israelis and injured 10, seven very critically.

The military wing of Hamas is effectively banned within the autonomous enclaves and any step on the part of the PNA [Palestinian National Authority] to outlaw it will only have a symbolic effect.

The latest bombing has thrown the Zionist state off balance. Zionist ministers and officials, especially opposition figures, have called on the head of the Zionist regime, Shim'on Peres, to stop the peace process altogether.

Indeed, Peres seems now to be more beleaguered than ever. He is expected to address the Israeli public shortly, probably to announce a series of measures aimed at stopping the bombing campaign.

Some pundits surmise that Peres will announce some draconian measures, including the suspension of the peace process with the Palestinians, intensifying the closure on the occupied territories, and the deployment of Israeli soldiers in east Qods.

There is also talk of postponing the Israeli general elections.

The former head of the internal security services, Shabak, said this morning that no amount of measures would guarantee 100 percent security for Israelis.

He said fighting this form of violence would be like finding a tiny needle in the midst of a big pile of hay.

Palestinian Affairs: Israel Imposes Closure on West Bank Cities, Villages

JN0503071696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli forces of occupation imposed a military siege on all the West Bank cities and villages as of midnight and barred their inhabitants from leaving them until further notice. The forces of occupation called on employers in Israel not to employ Palestinian workers. Thousands of Israeli policemen were deployed throughout Israel to counter any eventuality.

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Palestinian Affairs: Israel Asks Gaza Students in West Bank To Go Home

JN0503104996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1000 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli forces of occupation asked all Gaza Strip students studying in West Bank universities and institutes to return to their homes in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli forces of occupation said the students should assemble in Baytuniya by 1300 today to be transported by special buses to the Gaza Strip.

Palestinian Affairs: Arafat's Adviser Accuses Iran of Sheltering Terrorism

NC0403175196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1640 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Gaza, 4 Mar (MENA)—The Palestinian National Authority denounced today's explosion in Tel Aviv. [passage omitted]

Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, told MENA's correspondent in Gaza that President 'Arafat is following up developments after this afternoon's incident in Tel Aviv. He added that 'Arafat called for an emergency meeting with Palestinian security leaders and several Palestinian Authority [PA] ministers to discuss the situation following the unexpected developments.

Abu-Rudaynah accused foreign, non-Palestinian, elements in the region of being behind these terrorist incidents to wreck the peace process. He specifically accused Iran, which shelters [word indistinct], and encourages terrorism and recruits suicide elements to implement its goals.

He asked why these terrorist operations are carried out now, particularly as we get ready for the final-phase negotiations.

He warned of measures that Israel might adopt to wreck the peace process. He said sending Israeli forces into the PA territories, as reported, complicates the situation and harms the peace process. This is especially true because the Palestinians and the PA have announced their denunciation of these operations, he said. He added that the PA has also adopted all measures to track down everyone suspected of belonging to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] or the Jihad. These organizations, he added, no longer enjoy a legal or political status.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th, member of the Palestinian Legislative Council and minister of planning and international cooperation, said today's incident in Tel Aviv was a link in a chain of terror targeting the peace process and that the entire Palestinian people denounce it. He added that the PA has adopted all measures in solidarity with Israel to confront these terrorist acts and cling to the peace process till the end.

Palestinian Affairs: Jericho Radio Reacts to Clinton's Remarks on Tel Aviv Blast

JN0403203696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1754 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Good evening, dear listeners: U.S. President Bill Clinton said a short while ago that the forces that killed Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and the forces that killed the Israelis in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv have one clear common denominator: Both seek to end the peace process. When U.S. President Clinton, one of the two cosponsors of the peace process between the Palestinians and the Israelis, says this very clearly, he is in fact sending a number of messages at the same time.

The substance of these messages is that the killers of the Israelis and killers of Rabin have one link, one clear relationship, and one objective — practicing terrorism to assassinate the peace process. Their objective is to assassinate U.S. sponsorship of the peace process so that the law of the jungle and terrorism can prevail — for which the Israelis and the Palestinians are paying the price. Israeli officials, such as Rabin, and ordinary Israelis and Palestinians are also paying the price, as happened in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

Clinton's message says that the partnership between the killers of Rabin and those who planned and perpetrated the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem incidents is clear to the government of Shim'on Peres. Clinton said: If you fight for the sake of peace, we will be on your side. Fighting for the sake of peace is a civilized human value; it is the elixir of this age. One meaning of fighting for the sake of peace is to open all roads to peace and stop the activities of Israeli terrorist organizations, which are increasing in the settlements and which planned and carried out the killing of Yitzhaq Rabin.

Another meanings of peace is cooperation with the Palestinian partner on an equal footing. The Palestinian partner has always moved to liquidate the hotbeds of terrorism hotbeds in the areas controlled by the Palestinian forces. These hotbeds aim at striking and destroying the interests of the Palestinian people and Palestinian national decisionmaking, as well as embarrassing the Palestinian National Authority. The Palestinian Authority has banned the acts of the paramilitary organizations, has collected illegal weapons, and has condemned all criminal and terrorist acts against innocent Israeli civilians.

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Yes, there are Palestinians who seek to destroy the peace process, and there are Israelis who seek to destroy the peace process. There are also external forces that support the terrorism by both sides. However, these individuals are few. They will become fewer in a society that seeks peace and pays the price for peace with blood, as happened in Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Tel Aviv, and that pays the price in terms of living under a siege, closure, rumors, and threats to the entire peace plan, the Palestinian-Israeli peace and the Arab-Israeli peace.

U.S. President Bill Clinton's message is clear and decisive: The killers of Rabin and the killers of the Israelis in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv require a common action among the parties to the peace process in Palestine, in Israel, at the regional level, and even at the international level. The peace process is not just a Palestinian or Israeli achievement. It is also a regional and international achievement.

Let us fight together — Palestinians and Israelis — for the sake of peace, so that only peace, not terrorism, will prevail.

Palestinian Affairs: Ambassador Warns Syria, Iran on Hamas Support

NC0503105396 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian Ambassador to South Africa Salman al-Hirafi has warned Iran and Syria against playing with fire after the suicide operation in Tel Aviv. Al-Hirafi said: We address a clear message to those who support the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, particularly Tehran, which extends material, political, and military aid to Hamas, and Damascus. He said: The peace process will continue and they should not play with fire. He added: If the fire starts in Palestine and Israel, it could burn them all the way in Damascus and Tehran.

The Palestinian ambassador believes that those who carried out the attacks could not have acted without help from the inside. He pointed out that the extremist Israeli right and those who represent it inside the Army and the Internal Security organs could have played some role in these operations.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP Demands PNC Meet in Cairo, Rejects Charter Amendment

TA0403172296 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 4

[Report by special AL-QUDS correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman — 'Abd al-Rahim Malluh, member of the PLO Executive Committee and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] Political Bureau, has demanded that the Palestine National Council's [PNC] 21st session be convened at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo.

He said that the PFLP calls for holding the PNC session as soon as possible in order to assess the Palestinian situation from various aspects, including the political process, the Palestinian people's situation, and the dangers threatening its cause, unity, legitimate rights, and goals, rather than to amend the Palestinian Charter.

Malluh believes that choosing the Arab League headquarters as the venue for holding the PNC session "would enable the representatives of all the Palestinian factions to attend and discuss the Palestinian issue freely, away from the pressure of the occupation. In this way, the PNC will be able to assess the previous stage and formulate the plans and tasks that preserve the PLO and the Palestinian people's interests, rights, and unity."

Malluh affirmed that the PFLP is ready to participate in the PNC's preparatory work and ensure the elements for the success of this work and of the PNC session on the basis of rejecting the amendment of the charter and the Oslo agreement.

Malluh pointed out that the PFLP opposes any tampering with the Palestinian National Charter on the basis of Israeli conditions and considerations. He said: The issue of the charter is an internal Palestinian issue. The Palestinian people will decide whether to develop or amend the charter on the basis of national considerations alone. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Israeli Pressure on 'Arafat 'Counterproductive'

MM0403140196 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 17

[Article by 'Abd-al-Wahhab Badrakhan: "Hamas and Its Ploys"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The retaliatory operation for "Engineer" Yahia 'Ayyash's assassination was carried out according to a logic with which the Israelis are very familiar, since they are masters of terrorism despite their claim of being "far above it." However, yesterday's second operation in Jerusalem, coming as it did amid a change in Palestinian public opinion which recognizes that there are advantages in betting on the settlement despite the fact that not all its elements are positive, indicates that Hamas finds itself in an impasse.

The second operation represents a challenge launched by Hamas in response to a more significant and severe

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campaign mounted against it by both Israel and the Palestinian Authority [PA]. Its announcement that this would be its last operation before unilaterally entering a truce may be some political ploy which, although not unintelligent, may not succeed.

This operation confirms, however, that Hamas wanted to prove its existence by having an impact on the Israeli elections, and in this it has certainly succeeded. Hamas can leave its mark anywhere, whichever way we look at it, be it a truce or attacks, between Israel and a Palestinian Authority, and between negotiations and resistance. However, whatever it does, it cannot put the clock back, and hence its actions are untimely. It is easy now — away from the deceitful Israeli phraseology used in the past — to say that it resorts to "sabotage" and does not offer clear alternatives, whereas the Palestinian Authority is trying to establish a "state" and to improve the people's living conditions. Therefore the impasse will remain until further notice, until Hamas' future is decided.

No matter what Shim'on Peres tells [Israeli] public opinion in a critical election situation, neither of the two options, whether to let Hamas continue or to eliminate it, seems easy or feasible. Hence the Israeli prime minister might be tacitly satisfied with the "truce" offered by Hamas. He needs it, even though he has to reject it and ignore it, because, at this crucial time, he has no other option. He will accept the truce without publicly welcoming it, but if he wants to launch a wide-ranging security campaign in the context of the election campaign, he risks breaking the truce and causing a catastrophe to befall him on the eve of the elections, undermining his party's chances.

For the Israelis, the ideal approach would be to continue exerting pressure on the PA to do Israel's "dirty work." That would clearly be shortsighted on Israel's part, as it would be a new catalyst for pushing the Palestinian situation to the brink of civil war. Although every method has its limitations, the PA has ways and means of dealing with Hamas which have given concrete political results for peace, and it would be better if the PA were allowed to continue its work. Any pressure on it would be counterproductive. Experience has shown that there is no advantage in weakening Yasir 'Arafat, since Israel has not made arrangements to negotiate seriously for a just peace.

Israel has said all along that it will not give in to "terrorism." However, in view of its known terrorist heritage it is wary of anyone who reacts to its terrorism with terrorism. It should reap the consequences of its actions. There is no doubt that when it treats an elected president like 'Arafat as though he were one of its employees, it helps to create the appropriate atmosphere for Hamas' actions, because some of the resistance, which some people think is still needed, aims at forcing Israel to stop humiliating the Palestinian people in times of peace.

Palestinian Affairs: AL-QUDS Assails Israeli Measures in Wake of Jerusalem Blast

TA0403180996 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 13

[Editorial: "Separation and the Permanent Solution"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The series of measures and conditions approved yesterday by the Israeli Government in the wake of the new suicide operation in west Jerusalem affirm that the Israeli Government has ignored the clear condemnation expressed by the Palestinian side, which was reaffirmed by President Yasir 'Arafat yesterday against such operations. This is the same stance that was expressed following last week's two operations in Jerusalem and Ashqelon. The Israeli Government decided to practice a policy of large-scale collective punishment, tighten the siege around the National Authority areas under the slogan of "separation," and intensify military measures and the presence of police and border guards in the Palestinian territories that are still under occupation, including Arab Jerusalem.

Moreover, this Israeli position which places the responsibility for such operations on the Palestinian National Authority ignores the fact that the perpetrators of these operations came from areas that are still under the control of the Israeli occupation. Yesterday's operation in west Jerusalem, which is under Israel's control, took place at a time when the Israeli authorities had imposed an unprecedentedly tight closure. The question is: How can Israel demand that the Palestinian Authority, in these circumstances and with its limited capabilities, do what Israel itself has failed to accomplish with all its capabilities, forces, and measures in areas under its military control?

On the other hand, if Israel acknowledges that the aim of such operations is to stop the peace process, then how come the Israeli Government halts the talks, even though temporarily, and conditions the continuation of the peace process on compliance with its terms under the slogan of "implementing what has been agreed upon," while Israel has failed to implement everything that has been agreed upon and when the Palestinian side has recorded a long series of Israeli violations of the agreements? These violations have been committed directly by the Israeli Government.

And more importantly, how can Israel tamper with the peace process, dictate conditions, and impose sanctions

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when the Palestinian side, which is supposed to be the partner in peacemaking, has confirmed its condemnation of these operations and is making every possible effort to prevent such operations from being launched from territories under Palestinian control?

Once again, if Israel is justifying all its measures due to a lack of security for Israelis, the question to the Israeli Government is: What does it expect from people who lack a livelihood, security, and national sovereignty over all their lands whether through the Israeli Government measures or its continued occupation of a large part of the Palestinian territories?

Therefore, what should be stressed here is that if it is indeed interested in "separation" and "the implementation of agreements," Israel must cancel everything that impedes the implementation of the agreements and get ready to begin the talks on the permanent solution talks, which if they succeed, will definitely end the occupation and give the Palestinian people their right to live freely on their national soil and in their independent state, with holy Jerusalem as its capital. At that time, separation will have its meaning, stemming from a comprehensive peace, rather than a separation imposed on people part of whom still live under occupation and part of whose territory is still subject to this occupation. Very simply, peace cannot be achieved between two people — when one enjoys security, prosperity, and freedom, and the other is still suffering and lacks livelihood, security, and the most elementary forms of freedom.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Israeli Withdrawal From Talks Reported

JN0403195496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli prime minister's office said today that Israel has ordered its negotiating delegation in Maryland to return to Israel.

REUTER cited a source in the Israeli prime minister's office as saying that the Israeli decision was made after the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv today.

Israeli radio said today that Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has decided to summon the Israeli delegation from the U.S. State of Maryland.

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Algeria

Algeria: Authorities Seize Weekly Featuring Human Rights Violations

LD0403193596 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, the latest edition of the weekly LA NATION has been seized by the authorities. It contains a feature on human rights violations. The report is also published by the French monthly LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE.

Algeria: Interior Ministry Stops Printing of LA NATION Weekly

LD0403212596 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The interior ministry today issued the following statement:

Once again the weekly LA NATION has preferred to insist on continuing the publication of false and tendentious news to the point of praising terrorism, violence, and crime.

In spite of previous warnings given to the weekly, it is still showing the same readiness to repeat the mistakes and insists on publishing articles which are in no way different from those used by the inciting propaganda.

Besides the illegal aspect and the danger of the information practices used by the weekly, the interior minister has noticed that the recurring publication of this type of information is only carried with the intention of destabilizing general security and to shake public opinion.

For these reasons, the Algerian printing company [L'Imprimerie Nationale] did not print the latest issue of LA NATION dated 5-11 March. End of interior ministry statement.

Algeria: Foreign Minister Receives Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister

LD0203160196 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Affairs Minister Ahmed Attaf received Cuban Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Benigno Perez Fernandez today at the Foreign Ministry.

After the meeting, Benigno Perez Fernandez said that the relations between the two countries were quite broad. Over to Bariza Boutalli [further identification unknown]:

[Boutalli, in Spanish with superimposed Arabic translation] Relations are quite broad and the visit aims to resume and further consolidate the historical good relations between Algeria and Cuba.

We exchanged points of view and coordinated with the Algerian officials our countries' relations with international organizations and discussed the furthering of economic and trade relations in other fields such as medicine and sports.

Algeria: World Bank Official—Rate of Growth Must Be Increased

LD0203225896 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On his arrival in Algeria today, Kamal Darwish, vice president of the World Bank in charge of North Africa and the Middle East, said that he was very optimistic about the Algerians, adding that his visit to Algeria was aimed at contacting Algerian officials to discuss the government's program and to be acquainted with the situation and recent developments in Algeria.

Following his confirmation that the World Bank wanted to concentrate on the social aspects, Mr. Darwish made it clear that Algeria must speed up its growth and create a good balance between social network and investments.

The World Bank official believed that job opportunities should be created in the fields of agriculture, tourism, and services because the hydrocarbon sector on its own could create job opportunities, however, it could provide vital resources for this aim. He added that Algeria had great capabilities and resources not only in the field of petroleum and gas, but in the fields of agriculture and human resources.

Algeria: FIS European Supporters Issue Newsletter

MS0403100396 Southall THE ENLIGHTENMENT in English 27 Feb 96

[Newsletter "publicizing the Islamic Struggle in Algeria," published by Islamic Salvation Front "supporters in Europe" — quotation marks as received; passages in double parentheses received in brackets; received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Editorial

When the Ummah natural wealth becomes the source of its problems!

Praise be to Allah who Says: "The Unbelievers spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the path of Allah, and so they continue to spend, but at the end they will be overcome..." ((Korea, Surat Al- Anfal, 8:36, Translation to English by Yusuf Ali))

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Allah (S.W.T) has blessed this Ummah with abundant wealth yet the majority of its components is in a state of mendicity vis a vis less fortunate nations. Why is this? The problem is complex but amongst the predominant factors are the "resources (or wealth) management" and the "quality and proportion of investment". Investing in the "bad" can only bring "bad"!

Management in general has become almost an exact science with a well established set of rules derived from a combination of approaches based on economics and social science theoretical models, as well as empirical "corrections" resulting from experiences from different historical and geographical situations.

What "modelisation" can it be made for a large part of the Ummah wealth and how can established rules of efficiency be applied if the fundamental question of "who is the real owner?" is not unequivocally answered? In many part of the Ummah for example, the slogan of "the oil and gas are the property of the people" is continuously "played". In many part of the Ummah land, sincere managers are doing their upmost in rigorously defending the interests of the owners as defined by the above slogan until he/she is told in one of the "power corridors" that his/her working methods are wrong because based on the above false assumption. He or she is then told that by "people" it is not meant "all the population" but just "them": the restricted group. The ethical manager is then left with two hard to make choices. Either readjusting, for example, the "ranking" of companies listed by order of merit for a given business transaction, established by rigorous uncompromising methods and by doing this act he/she will put a first and most probably irreversible step into the "corruption private club". The other choice is to stick to his/her "ethical virginity" and accept the personal sacrifices and hardship in a system which has the monopoly of providing the basics of subsistence and which is also known to help and to recompense only those who accept to play by its dirty rules. The resources of this Ummah is so enormous and so is the temptation of restricted groups to take full advantage of that collective wealth with an unstoppable urge for accumulation and an obsessive urge for a full monopoly over the control of that wealth.

As for the other predominant factor of the bankruptcy of many part of the Ummah, namely the "quality and proportion of investments", one can have a quick realistic overview by just checking the part taken by many muslim countries armament bills in parallel with the "direction toward where those canons are pointing at". Who are the guests of honour in different international fairs of oppression and torture late equipments? What is the level of the "oppressive machines" expenses? What is the ultimate purpose of oppressing the muslim Ummah? Is it not related directly to the above urge of the few to monopolise the property by birth of the many? When the priority of the priorities is the preservation of the monopoly of the few, investments in many countries of the Ummah can only be of a type as to how to perpetuate and strengthen the status quo and their projected Life Cycle Cost can only be the lifetime expectancy of the group in power for that particular time.

The correlation between the actual delay in bringing up to the command levers true representatives in many countries of the Ummah, and the abundant natural resources, has been established for sometimes now. The Algerian example is for sure the most violent manifestation of that delay so far, and which has in a way deepened the understanding of how far can some criminal few, go in their crimes given a proper outside backing, in order to preserve their privileged status quo.

He who wants it all, usually ends up losing it all!

Diffusing the workers anger by the policy of "divide to rule"!

The military regime in Algeria is known to be an expert in the policy of "divide to rule". This policy which the regime have first learned from the French occupation of Algeria, has nevertheless perfected it over the years. The actual social crisis resulted from the Generals late decision to cut further, the subsistence of the workers by reducing their salaries until the end of year. This unjust decision was countered by a successful two day general strike which took place last week. The Generals responded by launching a huge defamation campaign using all its propaganda apparatus blaming the state of the public sector companies exclusively on their managers. This defamation campaign as others in all "protestation territories" be it political, social, cultural,... does not seem to be difficult given the monopoly detained by the Generals over the media.

How easy it is to explain to the workers that the reason for their misery comes from the bad management of their companies. How easy it is also to convince them of that by telling them: "look can you see that half of the equipments are idle! Is it not the responsibility of the management? The managers, just as the political opposition, are denied direct access to the public opinion to refute the accusations. They do not have the possibility to explain for example that indeed they have submitted in time, the demands of the nedeed spare parts to the ministry but nothing has come yet. The technocrats in the ministers will not have the possibility to explain to the public opinion that indeed they have received the demands and have

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included them in their budget which they have submitted to the finance ministry in order to provide the equivalent in hard currency. The bureaucrats in the finance ministry has not the possibility to explain that indeed the amount asked for has been included in the budget and the figure was used to back up the demand for the Algerian foreign debt rescheduling or for another demand of loans. He or she does not have the freedom to explain that the hard currency reserved for buying those spare parts has indeed entered the bank and their logbooks. He or she are strictly forbidden to explain that "orders from above" have asked for that entry in the logbook and many others to undergo a series of entries and exits in the logbooks jumping from one section to another, from one chapter to another in the logbook and from one bank account to another to make the fund movement untraceable in this opaque labyrinth. This "financial gymnastic" is just a precaution in case the foreign providers start to listen to the "propaganda of the opposition" and wants to check where the money goes to, but they usually don't! The technocrats in the financial central administration is not allowed to say that he has "heard" about huge sums of freshly accured loans being speedily "bounced" to overseas companies of a suspicious nature via Algerian companies of a doubtful concrete existence. He/she will not tell about the funds transferred to the obscure "black box" (caisse noire) operated by only a restrained circle and which the "treasury of war" of the generals is guarded. It finances most of the "oppression effort". One can even find a special credit line concerning the remuneration for killers of political opponents which the generals have "put a contract on".

The "oppression machine" is "eating up" most of the loans coming from outside. The Generals government wants to cut the workers wages but say nothing about the twenty thousands or so militia recruited, armed and paid wages far superior then that of university professors. These "patriots" as they are called by the generals propaganda machine, could as one may think accept easily a cut in their wages for the sake of their "beloved country". This will surely be enough to covert the workers wages.

It is not the fault of the workers, nor it is of the managers, but only that of the Generals irresponsible act of the 11 January 1992 which has plunged the country to the actual chaos. Following this path, the Generals will not be far from repeating the 1962 "solidarity case" by asking the Algerian people to make donation of their wives gold in order this time to finance the eradication doctrine. Most of those who are fighting in the Generals rank do it for the money and will abandon it for peanuts.

News of jihad and Mujahedeen!

"To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are wronged, and verily, Allah is Most powerful for their aid" ((Koran, Surat Al Hajj,22:39))

"We don't like to " beat around the bush ", we prefer clarity and frankness even if it means to be hanged for what we believe to be a duty and a right. The struggle against the regime of the military junta has become a legitimate and lawful duty as demonstrated previously, in order to "grab" the right of the people to freely choose. " ((Shaykh Abu Abdelfatah ali Belhadj in "Fasl el kalam fi mouajahate dolm el hokam" ("The conclusive criterion in confronting injustice from the rulers"). page 303. Book written from cell No 09 in the Blida Military jail. 1992))

In last week "The Enlightenment" issue, an article was published under the title: "The Algerian press, the dictatorship and the Islamists!". This article described how a journalist was prevented from entering the city of Laghouat and to report a big fighting which took place between the Mujahedeen and the Junta army. "The Enlightenment" however would like to apologise for a "mechanical mistake" that has transformed most of the "Laghouat" words in the text into the word "Laughed", hopping that the readers have made the correction themselves. And as promise, following is a report of the combats which took place in the city of "Laghouat" at the beginning of January 96.

The battle of Laghouat

"It was 7:25 A.M on Monday the first of January 1996, when a bombe explosion shacked the city of Laghouat. The bombe has been put in a dustbin inside "Si L'Haous" army barracks. Fourteen minutes later, another explosion was heard coming from the same barracks. The second explosion was much more powerful than the first one.

Later during the day, one of the Mujahedeen was arrested and tortured to death. During the "questioning" which lasted all night, the man admitted he was one of the executants of the operation and named the other three Mujahedeen as well as their hide out.

On the following day (tuesday 02/01/96) at the time of early morning prayer, a group of 25 army commandos went to the named hide out. This precise time was chosen hopping to surprise the Mujahedeen during the prayer. The Mujahedeen however were prepared to the eventual confrontation given the arrest of one of them. They make the first move and attacked the commandos group to the surprise of this later. The commandos group

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in a defensive position kept on retreating and before the operation reached the city centre of Laghouat, the commandos have lost 22 elements on the way.

Later on the same day at around 7 A.M., the city of Laghouat were closed to the traffic and the people by the army troops estimated to have reached 2000 soldiers. The troops were composed of soldiers from the "rapid intervention forces", gendarmes and policemen. Reinforcement came from as far as the region of Aflou, Djelfa, Ghardaia, Ouargla, Hassi Messaoud and Annaba in addition to the unites of "special forces" which were flown from Algiers. The city of Laghouat blockade lasted eight days and seven nights. Light and heavy weaponry were used by the army including the soviet made tanks T72, Tchilka, FMPK, RPG7. A combat helicopter was also used. This later was hit by the Mujahedeen bullets and went back from where it came from. It did not return until five days later to drop propaganda leaflets from high altitude telling the Mujahedeen about "the merits of surrendering and how wonderful the junta "Rahma" (clemency) new rules are". The commander of the fourth military region General Fodhil Saidi was in charge of the whole operation.

On wednesday morning, the General added his voice to the "psychological war" and asked the Mujahedeen to surrender using a megaphone. The Mujahedeen answered him back by putting his sound amplifier out of order with a burst of gunfire. The combats continued and the commander of the "special forces" as well as one of his assistants were shot dead. Other fighting have meantime developed in many other places of the city between the Mujahedeen and the Junta soldiers. The first operation which ended in the city centre of Laghouat resulted later on in the death of three Junta army officers having the ranks of major and a lieutenant from the Hassi Messaoud gendarmery. An officer with a commander rank was severely injured.

The combats which took place simultaneously in different locations of Laghouat have left huge losses within the Junta ranks. 217 Junta soldiers were killed and amongst them 47 gendarmes. Another 100 have been reported to have succumbed to their wounds in the military hospital of Ain Anadja. At the end of the operations, a group of Mujahedeen was spotted retreating North towards the direction of Sidi Makhlouf. Many military vehicles transporting troops composed of Junta army, gendarmes and armed militia went towards that direction. They encircled the location where the group of Mujahedeen were. It was getting dark and the Junta troops used light projectors to illuminate the place. They soon were made out of order by a burst of gunfire which was immediately followed by the Mujahedeen offensive against the Junta troops in order to cut the encirclement. A junta captain, 7 commandos and two armed militia were killed during the offensive. The encircled Mujahedeen retreated safely to their bases.

Amongst the Mujahedeen who were killed is the Mujahedeen commander of the Laghouat region Aissa Karoum, the mujahedeen Farhat, Bouaicha, Benaissi Satouri and Djamel Ben Zoubir may Allah accept them as martyrs. Amine.

The above is what has reached the outside world but it still represent a fraction of all that has happen in the glorious city of Laghouat in the symbolic first day of 1996.

Announcement!

"The Enlightenment" would like to thank all those who have been helping publicising the actual struggle in Algeria by their generous financial contributions as well as in the information front by providing articles, news and information about Algeria particularly during the month of Ramadhan. May Allah reward you all. Amine.

Egypt

Egypt: Foreign Ministry Spokesman on Tel Aviv Blast

NC0403205896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2038 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Mar (MENA)—A Foreign Ministry official spokesman this evening condemned today's terrorist incident in Tel Aviv and offered condolences to the families of the victims and to the Israeli government. The spokesman said that these crimes committed against innocent civilians cannot be accepted and must be strongly condemned.

The spokesman noted that these terrorist acts not only target Israeli civilians, but the whole peace process and all those who are working for a comprehensive and just peace in the region.

The spokesman called on all parties to take the necessary measures to foil the schemes of the opponents of peace.

Egypt: Musa Phones 'Arafat on Peace Process, Israeli Events

NC0503072996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2245 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, 4 Mar (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat received a telephone call from Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa this evening. During the conversation, 'Arafat and Musa

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discussed the peace process in light of the recent events in Israel.

Egypt: Musa, Israel's Baraq Discuss Terrorism, Peace Process

NC0403215896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2055 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa received a message from Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq during a meeting with Israeli Ambassador in Cairo David Sultan this evening.

The Israeli ambassador said he and Musa discussed the grave situation generated by subversive terrorist operations and the steps to be taken to rescue the peace process from terrorist threats.

Egypt: Envoy to Israel Urges Coordinated Antiterrorism Efforts

NC0503075096 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0520 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni, in Tel Aviv, by 'Abd-al-Mun'im Mabruk in Cairo on 5 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mabruk] Good morning, Ambassador.

[Basyuni] Good morning.

[Mabruk] What is your assessment of the spate of violent acts in Israel during the last 10 days?

[Basyuni] The most recent incident is the 22d since the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles [DOP] was signed. A question comes to mind: Why did these operations occur after the DOP signing? Are they designed to strangle the peace process? Questions are being raised about this spate of bloody acts. In this incident on Dizengoff Street, a very busy commercial street, the suicide attacker tried to enter a shopping mall but when he saw that there were many security guards, he did not enter the building but blew himself up with the explosives wrapped around his body. He was also carrying a briefcase containing about 15 kg of explosives. Apparently the extremists are determined to abort the peace process.

We believe that fighting against terrorism and continuing the peace process must go hand in hand. Peace is a vital factor in attaining security and stability. As long as there is no peace, there can be no security or stability. Despite these bloody incidents, we believe that the peace negotiations should continue until the desired objective of a comprehensive, lasting, and just regional peace is reached.

[Mabruk] What effect has the incident had on Shim'on Peres' government?

[Basyuni] Undoubtedly these incidents have put the Israeli Government in a very delicate situation and caused the Israeli public to ask: Where are the fruits of peace? You know of course that vital importance is attached to the security issue, particularly the personal security of Israeli citizens. When these citizens no longer feel safe, this will mean a dangerous line has been crossed and the citizens will revise their position. Hence, it is important, as I have said, to fight terrorism but at the same time to continue the peace efforts and provide security for everyone in this region.

[Mabruk] Ambassador Basyuni, whose task is it to confront this violent terrorism in Israel and the Palestinian territories? Is it the task of the Palestinian National Authority alone, the task of Israel, or both?

[Basyuni] The Palestinian Authority has begun implementing firm measures against the illegal organizations. The Palestinian Authority and Israel must coordinate their efforts to fight terrorism. I wish to reassert that terrorism is not confined to our region but is an international phenomenon. The whole world must make concerted efforts to eliminate this phenomenon. God endowed our region with security and stability but these terrorists want to deprive it of both. Coordinated efforts are needed to eliminate terrorism in all its forms and from whatever source.

[Mabruk] Thank you Ambassador Basyuni.

[Basyuni] You are welcome. I pray to God to protect His own Egypt and the entire region from these terrorists.

[Mabruk] Of course Egypt wishes to preserve its role and ensure that the peace process continues.

[Basyuni] Egypt certainly has a major and pivotal role in building peace. Peace is a strategic objective that Egypt seeks to attain so that the region's nations can enjoy security and stability, God willing.

[Mabruk] Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

[Basyuni] You are welcome.

Egypt: Press Blames Israeli, Palestinian Extremists for Violence

NC0403133996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0615 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Mar (MENA) — The major headlines of the Cairo newspapers published today reported the suicide operation in west Jerusalem yesterday, as did the commentaries.

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The newspapers affirmed in their headlines that this operation threatens the Middle East peace process.

In its commentary, AL-AHRAM warned against the repercussions of this incident, which according to the newspaper will be detrimental to the peace process if the Israelis and Palestinians allow themselves to become emotional about what happened. Emotions could ruin the peace process, which in turn would satisfy the desires of Israelis who bear a grudge against it, as well as fulfill the wishes of the extremists in the Palestinian camp.

The newspaper described the incident as difficult not only for the Israelis but also for the Palestinians. The paper said the Israelis had not yet gotten over last Sunday's attack [24 February], when they received a similar blow yesterday. The Palestinians, too, had not caught their breath regarding their concerted efforts to lift the Israeli siege imposed on their territories, which are under Palestinian self-rule.

In another commentary, AL-AHRAM said that the attacks waged by Hamas have increased the popularity of the extremist right inside Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' margin of popularity over the extremist Likud Leader Benyamin Netanyahu has faded away.

At the same time, the newspaper held the Israeli authorities responsible for the emergence of violence. It said: Israel is responsible for the emergence of Hamas because it wagered that this movement would strike the secular current within the PLO. In addition, Israel's deliberate attempts to hamper the settlement process and clear violation of the agreements with the Palestinian Authority will only cause further violence, which will not stop with Hamas.

Under the headline "Extremism and the Peace Process," AL-AKHBAR Chief Editor Jalal Duwaydar writes: No matter what the tune has been over the past years about Israeli practices and excesses against the Palestinian people and their insistence on occupying the Arab territories, no one approves of or accepts that, "for humanitarian reasons," innocent people should be the victims of such bloody terrorism. The suicide attacks the Israelis have been subjected to — the most recent being the operation that blew up the Israeli bus yesterday morning — could be a reaction to the secret killings the Israeli organizations carried out against Palestinian extremists. However, they have additional goals as well.

Duwaydar continues: An analysis of the actions and reactions that have taken place suggests that there is an alliance between the Israeli and Palestinian extremists to deal a blow to the peace process and thwart the concerted efforts that are being made to end the bloody conflict in the Middle East.

It would neither be strange nor intriguing for us to shortly hear about cooperation and coordination between the two sides for political reasons in order to execute paid deals. All information confirms the existence of an agreement between the Israeli extremists and some Palestinian extremists to provide facilities within Israel to repeatedly carry out such suicide operations.

Duwaydar affirmed that despite the glitter of these suicide operations, whose victims are innocent people in Israel, the real victim is the peace process. Success in those operations means a greater loss for the Palestinians and Arabs in the form of continued occupation of their land and of turning their lost rights into a painful reality.

In his daily "Dividing Lines" column in AL-JUMHURIYAH, Chief Editor Samir Rajab says: Neither the extremist Jews nor their Palestinian counterparts want peace. The two parties are strongly and firmly bound to terrorism, violence, and a great desire to shed blood.

Rajab affirmed that the Jewish and Palestinian extremists will not be happy if peace and stability prevail in the region because it goes against their nature, constitution, and personal interests. He wondered about what is happening in Israel and Palestine. The president of Israel is calling for immediate suspension of the negotiations. People are demonstrating in the streets and demanding Shim'on Peres' resignation. The situation is not very different in the Palestinian arena. Those who claim that the land has been lost forever and that the Palestinians will, for the rest of their lives, continue to desire the establishment of a state with a clear meaning, have made their views known publicly. This is wishful thinking.

Rajab warned that if the situation continues as it is, everyone will be thrust into the vicious circle of a mutual revenge that never ends. Thus, everyone will be pushed back to the starting point.

Egypt: Opposition Paper Comments on Tel Aviv Bombing

NC0503114996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0750 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 5 Mar (MENA)— Commenting on the suicide operation in Tel Aviv yesterday, the AL-WAFD newspaper, the mouthpiece of the opposition Wafd party, asks whether the current events on Palestinian territory are a plot targeted against the peace process or are they a rejection of the establishment of the Palestinian state on the Palestinian land? This state is currently making initial and sound

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steps so that the Palestinian people can administer their affairs with their own hands, AL-WAFD adds.

The paper expresses the conviction that the Palestinian people are the only losers as a result of this cycle of bloody violence orchestrated by some organizations. It adds that the Palestinian people are entitled to have a breather after 45 years of struggle.

AL-WAFD goes on to say that the rights obtained by the Palestinian people might be partial, and indeed they are, but the alternative could be more suffering for a people who almost drowned in the oceans of Palestinian and Arab conflicts that exploited the Palestinian issue.

The paper concludes its commentary saying that reason dictates that all the Palestinian people's factions must support the legitimacy represented by Yasir 'Arafat. However, it seems that this does not please many people, whether Palestinians or Israelis. Hence, the objectives of the extremists from both sides meet to abort the Palestinian state.

Egypt: Columnist Urges Arabs, Muslims To End Violence, Bloodshed

NC0403194296 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 28 Feb 96 p 16

[From the "Idea" column by Mustafa Amin]

[FBIS Translated Text] What is happening in our countries? Bloodbaths in Iraq, a power struggle between the amir and his father in Qatar, bombs in Bahrain, massacres in Algeria, and assassination of Copts in Egypt.

These are not our countries. These events are alien to us. We have always been peaceful peoples that do not know treachery. We have always been peoples that believe in peace and security, where the cross embraces the crescent and where there is no place for sectarianism, civil war, or bloodbaths.

Our peoples alone have the power to restore peace and love to our countries and strike at those who shed the blood of innocent people and plant hatred and bigotry and those who play with fire.

In my view, the solution lies in genuine democracy, in opening the doors and windows, in establishing justice and fairness, in eliminating terrorism. It lies in the sovereignty of law and equality between all citizens.

We reject the rule of gangs. We want fair rulers who believe in compassion, reject despotism, preach clemency, and reject tyranny and revenge.

We are a good hearted people, who like our rulers to be good hearted, and do not like to be ruled by evil men or controlled by gangs, butchers, and thugs. All people are equal before law. There is no difference between weak and strong, between rich and poor, or between those who have and those who have not.

We call for a conference that includes all Arab and Islamic nations to discuss the tribulation threatening us all and draw up a charter that attacks terrorism and violence, resists tyranny and despotism, and spurns the shedding of blood.

We should rescue every Arab people from blood spilling and tampering with laws. We should demand that all lights be switched on and an end put to the darkness in which some peoples are living. We call for free debates so that freedom and human rights can prevail.

It is in the peoples' power to put an end to the dark ages.

Egypt: Al-Sharif, Libyan Information Minister Hold Talks

NC0403153596 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Minister of Information Safwat al-Sharif received in his office this afternoon Fawziyah Bashir, minister of information in the Libyan Jamahiriyah, and the delegation accompanying her. The delegation arrived in Cairo for a several days visit.

The Egyptian and Libyan sides held talks at the Information Ministry to boost media cooperation between the two in all spheres.

Egypt: Musa on Yemeni-Eritrean Conflict, Mideast Peace Process

NC0403135696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1250 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that Egypt is continuing its efforts and contacts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict between Yemen and Eritrea over the al-Hanish islands in the Red Sea.

In statements to correspondents today, Musa added that Egypt is in constant touch with Yemen, Eritrea, and France over this conflict. He said: We have not been officially notified by Yemen that it is convinced that the peaceful efforts have reached a dead end.

In statements after attending the meetings that President Husni Mubarak held with the Niger National Salvation Council delegation and the Slovenian foreign minister, Musa said that Egypt will continue its peaceful endeavors despite some undoubted difficulties. He added: The most important thing in our peaceful undertaking is that

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the situation should not reach the point of a military clash.

In response to a question about the tripartite Egyptian-Yemeni-Eritrean summit, Musa said that this summit was proposed and the intention to hold it still exists but certain conditions must be met first.

As regards new French proposals on the conflict between Sanaa and Asmara, the Egyptian foreign minister said that these proposals are expected to be submitted.

In reply to a question about the summit on a mechanism to resolve conflicts in Africa that is slated to be held in Addis Ababa, Musa said: We expect Ethiopia to in its capacity as the current OAU chairman send invitations to hold this meeting at the end of this month or early next month.

Asked whether the recent incidents in Jerusalem have delayed the Egyptian-Jordanian-Palestinian summit, 'Amr Musa denied this, and said: This summit will be held, but the dates have not yet been decided.

On yesterday's explosion in Jerusalem, Musa said: We have underlined the importance of continuing the peace negotiations. He noted that according to press agency reports, the Israeli prime minister also said this today and it is a positive stand. He added: We agree with the Israeli prime minister's stand on continuing the peace process, if his statements as regards this issue are correct.

Egypt: Niger Official on Recent Coup, Need for African Support

NC0403161396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0040 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Mar (MENA)—Colonel Yusuf Maiga, deputy chairman of the National Salvation Council in Niger, [name and title as received] and his accompanying delegation met this evening with the accredited ambassadors of African countries in Egypt.

During the meeting, Col. Maiga reviewed the reasons that led to the recent military coup in Niger, as a result of which tensions in the political and social situation threaten the emergence of a civil war in the country.

He said that things are now calm, "but we are rather concerned on the international level by the stances of some western countries, international financial organizations, France, and the United States on the Niger file being studied by the IMF now," he said.

He asked the ambassadors of the African countries to exert efforts with the leaders of their countries to support Niger so that its destiny is not left to fate.

For his part, Mohamed Bazoum, minister of foreign affairs and cooperation in Niger, who is accompanying the delegation, clarified that the majority of the political parties welcomed the new transitional government. There was no resistance to the coup since there was no other alternative to confronting the deteriorating situation in the country.

He said that if anyone is thinking of applying pressure on Niger, they have to take into consideration the bad conditions the people are living in and to understand the sensitive situation in the country. They should also be more lenient in order to realize development and progress in Niger.

Mr. Shams-al-Din Ndiaye, Senegalese ambassador in Cairo and doyen of the African diplomatic corps in Cairo, expressed his hope on behalf of the group that the new government in Niger will be supported by the African people. He said that although there are delegations from Niger which have toured African countries, the African ambassadors in Cairo will convey the message to their leaders. They also hope that the people of Niger will be successful in their struggle against poverty and backwardness and will realize prosperity through peace and solidarity.

Egypt: Niger Official Wants Egyptian, Western Support in IMF

NC0403142896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0023 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Mar (MENA) — Colonel Yusuf Maiga, deputy chairman of the National Salvation Council in Niger, [name and title as received] has stated that Egypt is a friendly country. It lies at a crossroads between various continents and brings political and diplomatic weight to bear on the international and regional level.

Col. Maiga said in statements to MENA that tomorrow, Monday [4 March], he will deliver a message from Colonel Ibrahim Abari Manasirah, chairman of the National Salvation Council and president of the republic [name and title as received], to President Husni Mubarak. The message will explain recent developments in Niger and ask President Mubarak to support his country, rally western support for Niger, urge the west to review its position on the Niger file, which is before the IMF now, and remove any obstacles on the matter.

The colonel added that the chairman of the Niger National Salvation Council is expected to visit Egypt soon to meet President Mubarak. He said that during his visit to Cairo, he met with the ministers of defense, foreign

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affairs, and interior, and with the shaykh of al-Azhar. The results of his meetings were very satisfactory. He is expected to meet with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid tomorrow.

Col. Maiga affirmed that the presence of a civilian government in Niger is enough proof that the military does not intend to take control of the government and that presidential and legislative elections will take place before the end of September, which is the end of the period for the transitional government.

On Niger's position on the Tuareg tribes in the north, the colonel explained that Niger never refused to give the Tuareg tribes their political and social rights and that there is no truth to what is being said about this. In April 1995, the two sides signed an agreement to end military mutiny in the region. This agreement is presently being respected and applied. The minister of state for the interior in the current Niger Government is a member of the Tuareg tribe. One of the advisors to the Salvation Council is also a Tuareg tribe member.

Mohamed Bazoum, minister of foreign affairs and cooperation in Niger, said that his country's relations with its neighbors are good. They know the real situation in Niger, and the coup was no surprise to them.

He added that what is happening in the northern part of the country bordering Algeria has nothing to do with extremism or religion. There was a split inside the Tuareg tribes that inhabit this region. Since the agreement was signed in April 1995, we have been supporting and helping them to resolve their internal problems and establish peace.

He noted that extremism is spreading in the world, but this phenomenon is considered marginal for Niger; however, as an Islamic country, we are subjected to this danger, which is why we are showing solidarity with the countries that suffer from it, particularly Algeria. In this regard, we support President Husni Mubarak's initiative to confront terrorism on the international level.

Bazoum affirmed the need for France and the United States to review their stands toward Niger in the IMF. We also have to confront the challenges of democracy, he said. He pointed out that France has actually started to show some understanding toward the situation in Niger. We are confident that the U.S.'s stance will change, particularly after the visit to Niger by the U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs, he concluded.

Egypt: Niger Official Meets With Mubarak

NC0403152596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0940 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Mar (MENA) — President Husni Mubarak has received a message from Ibrahim Baramina, chairman of the National Salvation Council in Niger [name and title as received] on the events that have taken place in Niger since 26 January. Colonel Yusuf Hamadu Maiga, envoy of the chairman of the National Salvation Council, delivered the message during a meeting with President Husni Mubarak today. After the meeting, the Niger official said that in appreciation of Egypt's status on African and international levels and of President Mubarak's standing, we decided to brief President Mubarak on the recent developments in Niger. Maiga said that the Niger delegation also seized the opportunity to discuss with President Mubarak cooperation between the two countries, noting that this cooperation is long standing.

Regarding the decision made by the United States and France to stop aid to Niger following these events, the Niger official said he thinks these are initial positions by the two countries but that after understanding the reality of the situation these positions may change. He described the situation in his country as very calm and noted that the people are in ageement with the Armed Forces and that they understand that what happened was done to save the country.

Egypt: Niger Official Meets With Arab League Chief

NC0403155596 Cairo MENA in English 1358 GMT 4 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, 4 Mar (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid today conferred with the vice president of Niger and his accompanying delegation, currently visiting Egypt.

The Niger official briefed the secretary general on the latest developments in his country following the military coup of January 26, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said.

Conditions in Niger are stable and constitutional changes are under consideration, the Niger official told 'Abd-al-Majid.

Niger is keen on establishing special relationships with Arab countries and looks forward to boosting Arab-African cooperation, he said.

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Egypt: Slovene Foreign Minister Meets Mubarak

NC0403153196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1135 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Mar (MENA)—Slovene Foreign Minister Zwan Talir [name as transliterated] stressed that he has knowledge about the establishment of peace in the Middle East from experience. He noted that the peace process was the main focus in his discussions with President Husni Mubarak during their meeting today. In a statement after the meeting, he said that he found President Mubarak fully aware of the situation in the Middle East, as well as in central Europe and the Balkan region. He said that President Mubarak's reception today capped his current official visit to Egypt, noting that he conveyed to President Mubarak a message of greetings from the Slovene president and an invitation to visit.

The Slovene official said that relations between his country and Egypt are excellent and added that he asserted to President Mubarak the need to promote economic cooperation between the two countries. On his country's stance on the situation in the Balkan region, he said: We believe that full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement is basic and vital for the area. He pointed out that if the Dayton Agreement is not considered to be a model, it is better than continuing the state of war. He noted that implementation of the military part of the agreement is proceeding well, but the important thing is to implement the civilian part—allowing elections and guaranteeing freedom of movement for Bosnian civlians returning to their homes.

The Slovene official stresed the need for trying war criminals who were involved in committing bestial violations during the war in Bosnia. He called for securing an international presence in Bosnia. Regarding his view of the future situation in the Balkan region, he said: I am optimistic about implementing the military aspect of the Dayton Agreement, which is important and without which there can be no peace. He noted that to achieve stability in the long run, it is necessary to implement the civilian aspect of the agreement.

Egypt: Authorities Foil 'Terrorist Plot,' Arrest 41 'Terrorists'

NC0403180596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1720 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Mar (MENA)—State Security Detective forces in Egypt foiled a new terrorist plot and arrested 41 terrorist leaders and elements in villages and cities in al-Sharqiyah Governorate, northeast Cairo, this morning.

A responsible security source at the Egyptian interior ministry said numerous organizational papers, forged documents, and a large quantity of research papers and booklets containing al-Jihad ideology and sanctioning the seizure of people's property were found with these terrorists.

Large quantities of cassette tapes, receipts of remittances, and exchange of foreign currencies, revealed part of the huge funds designated to back up the movement — which is driven from abroad — and were also seized.

In a statement issued by the Interior Ministry, the responsible security source said:

Within the framework of the firm security policy to liquidate criminal dens and cells of remaining fugitive terrorist elements and capture those elements belonging to the various extremist organizations across the republic's governorates, the State Security Intelligence Department has succeeded in monitoring the movements of the leaders of the terrorist al-Jihad Organization abroad. These leaders entrusted a terrorist cadre with the task of reviving the organization's activities by forming some organizational dens to resume criminal and sabotage operations inside the country.

The statement added: The plan laid down to expose this movement showed that the terrorist group residing in one of the European countries — which consisted of Tharwat Salah Shihatah, 'Adil 'Abd- al-Majid 'Abd-al-Bari, and Hani Yusuf al-Siba'i — issued instructions to the two fugitive leaders abroad, Ahmad Mahmud Hasan Rabi' and Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Bilasi, to manage the organization, direct its elements inside the country, and arrange the necessary financial backing for carrying out their criminal schemes.

Leader al-Shahhat Muhammad Ibrahim Subayhah was given the task of bringing together the extremist elements in the Ismailia, al-Sharqiyah, and al-Qalyubiyah governorates and making them work for the organization's objectives. Leader al-Sayyid Mustafa 'Abd-al-Baqi Faraj was appointed the official in charge of contacts abroad through the telephone and letters to specific post office boxes in an Arab capital. He was also given the task of choosing and picking some extremist elements, preparing them to travel abroad for military training in the art of fighting and the use and manufacture of weapons and explosive, and receiving the necessary financial backing and investing it in order to provide the requirements for carrying out their criminal schemes.

Orders were also issued to prepare a main center in al-Sharqiyah governorate to hide the elements sent from abroad.

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Acting on the information obtained by the state security organs, legal measures were taken and security forces arrested 41 leaders of the terrorist movement and seized organizational and other documents.

The defendants have been referred to the Higher State Security Prosecution Office, which started interrogating the arrested defendants under the supervision of the public prosecutor.

Egypt: 'Abd-al-Rahman Assistant, Others Arrested in Plot

NC0503105096 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 29 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Najwa 'Abd-al-'Aziz]

[FBIS Translated Text] Security forces have arrested 'Adil 'Uthman Hasanyan, assistant to Jihad leader Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, who is currently being detained in Washington. The Higher State Security Prosecution had earlier revealed that a number of persons are affiliated with extremist groups.

Hasanyan and others were arrested inside a hideout on Ahmad 'Urabi street in the 'Ayn Shams housing units. The prosecution decided to detain them for 15 days pending the outcome of investigations. The investigations are being conducted by prosecutors Hani Burham and Muhammad Hilmi Qandil under the supervision of Counselor Hisham Saraya.

The prosecution charged the detainees with planning to carry out terrorist operations at the book fair.

Morocco

Morocco: 'Deployment' Story Said To Divert Attention From Algerian Crisis

MM0403130196 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 3 Mar 96 p 6

[Unattributed report: "Rabat: Sources Say Reports of Moroccan Deployments on Border Part of Algerian Psychological War"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Rabat, AL-HAYAH — Moroccan sources believe that the reports of Moroccan military deployments on the border with Algeria fall in the framework of attempts to "divert the Algerians' attention from the internal crisis in their country."

The sources said that these reports are part of a psychological war based on the crisis in relations between Morocco and Algeria — a crisis which has been in existence for some time, especially since the common border between the two countries was closed in the summer of 1994. This is in addition to Morocco's demand for a temporary suspension of the Maghreb Union's institutions because of the increasing disagreement over the position on developments in Western Saharan dispute.

The Algerian newspaper EL KHABAR (close to the Army) pointed the day before yesterday to the existence of Moroccan military deployments on the border. It cited "Saharan sources" as saying that Morocco built an airfield near the border "and deployed armored vehicles, artillery, and forces, and move the 3rd and 6th Corps of the Moroccan Royal Forces [to the border]." [passage omitted]

Morocco: King Hassan Addresses Accession Anniversary Ceremony

LD0403105696 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 1223 GMT 3 Mar 96

[Address by King Hassan II of Morocco at a ceremony marking the 35th anniversary of his accession to the throne at the royal palace in Rabat — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Praise be to God and peace and prayers on our master the messenger of God, his kin and companion.

My dear people: Every year at the beginning of this day, God wishes to grant you and me his blessings. [passage omitted]

God has conferred on me blessings for which I am grateful to him; I thank him for the blessings of a full recovery from the ill health that befell me. The means of treatment have been undertaken. As written in the book [Koran], a believer goes through trials and misfortunes. [passage omitted]

Under the shadow of the constitution we have built the structure of a modern state based on democratic institutions, thus creating qualitative leaps and legislative revolution in the system of government. The constitution has brought about a free popular referendum transferring some of the royal institution's powers to the country's representative institutions which, as stipulated in the constitution's preamble, practices sovereignty through referendum and constitutional institutions. It also came to entrench the historic role of the monarchy and entrust the king with responsibilities and duties, making him a mediator in time of crisis and the main driving force behind the institutions, to link the past with the present. [passage omitted]

We have made crucial and important reform. On a proposal presented by the consultative council for human rights, we have amended the legislations that contravene with human rights' requirements and that are guaranteed by international conventions.

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Since the adoption of the constitution in 1962, we have been monitoring the development of its implementation by the institutions and have worked to improve its performance and entrench its effectiveness. Four times during 30 years only, we have amended a number of its provisions and have replaced them with others that have increased the scope of the responsibilities for its institutions, achieving for the latter further efforts and desire to cooperate among them to attain the desired goal.

God willing, we will achieve what we have pledged. Within this year and after the second session of the House of Representatives, we will present a draft amendment aimed at establishing a bicameral parliament proceeding from our belief in the benefits and effectiveness of this course and out of our eagerness to provide our people with the opportunities for further participation. The bicameral parliament would provide those society's sections concerned: regions, local authorities, professional associations, and trade unions the opportunity to participate in a parliament with a power of decision-making. This is liable to set a competitiveness between the two councils to improve their performance and enrich their deliberations with the required experience and wisdom during the discussion of legislative texts, which the two councils alternate in studying and endorsing.

We will provide the region with the necessary legal framework to complete the constitutional reform of 1992 which promoted the region into an authority running its affairs in a democratic manners, thus constituting the basic tool for economic and social development. By this we will have crowned the process of consolidating and entrenching the decentralization. Our aim from this decentralization was to empower our citizens to run their local and regional affairs. Taking note that enabling the regions to highlight their specific features cannot and will not be allowed to undermine the national unity of the country nor the entity of the nation to which we will continue to be vigilant, as we were obliged by the constitution, so that its constituents bond firmly in cohesion and harmony.

The reform we called for and pledged our people to undertake does not confine to amending some of the constitution's provisions. Rather it is a comprehensive reform which necessitates the examination of each sector that need reforming and training, particularly the sectors of administration, economy, and education. The issue at point here is reconsidering the situation of the Maghreban house affairs which we want its foundation stone to be firm, its roof to be strong, and its windows made of glass [as heard], proportionately built. [passage omitted]

We are determined to continue the process of reform and correction until good ethics are part and parcel of the state, the old good Morocco, and until Morocco's enemies and opponents are not able to find anything that might smitten their evil eyes.

Dear people: given your country's geographical position, historical role, and entity, of course you are aware of your nation's regional and global commitments, which stem up from its noble values for coexistence and cooperation with other nations.

The world has witnessed deep transformations; Morocco has been able to follow up and understand these developments and make up its mind on how to deal without having to change the tenets of its policy based upon international peace and coexistence and international cooperation based upon mutual respect.

Therefore, it is not strange that the aim of our foreign policy has always been geared toward peace in the world and tirelessly encouraging all initiatives that lead in that direction, starting with the question of our territorial integrity. We have accepted that the latter could be resolved by a confirmative referendum under the UN aegis.

We took the opportunity of our partaking in the celebrations marking the UN 50th anniversary to boost our contacts with presidents and monarchs of fraternal and friendly countries. We reiterated to them our commitment to UN resolutions, our eagerness to respect the international will, and our rejection of all sorts of tricks and horse trading over the peace plan adopted by the international community, which should not be altered unless one wants to see the United Nations lose its credibility.

As I already confirmed to you, O dear people, in our speech on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Green March, we will never change our declared position by an iota. We have full confidence in the firmness of the UN Security Council and its determination to remain true to its resolutions.

This artificial problem, which has been concocted by the foes of our territorial integrity, would not have lingered on had everybody had the will to build a united Arab Maghreb.

However, the recent stance taken by some sides forced Morocco last Autumn to call for the suspension of the institutions of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] for a limited period.

During this period, member states should review their policies and evaluate objectively the position of the

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union in a bid to give a fresh impetus to its march by removing all obstacles.

Our call stemmed up from our belief that the joint action at the level of the union needs clarity of objectives and a cooperation in an atmosphere of concord, responsibility, and non-belligerence in accordance with the stipulations of the AMU's charter, which was unanimously adopted by the union's founding members. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Sudan: Al-Bashir Returns From Visit to Syria

EA0303201796 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President 'Umar al-Bashir, today returned to the country from Damascus after a two-day official visit to the Arab Republic of Syria.

During the visit, President al-Bashir held talks with the Syrian president, Hafiz al-Asad, which focused on ways of consolidating relations between the two countries.

In a statement on his return, the president of the Republic said the visit was necessitated by the unique nature of Sudanese-Syrian relations and the need for continuous dialogue and contact between the people and leaders of both countries. He added that the visit was also necessitated by Sudan's desire to explain its stance regarding the UN Security Council's resolution number 1044, its implications and the efforts made by Sudan in connection with it. He said he had discovered that the Syrian leadership had a very clear understanding of Sudan's position on the matter. Lieutenant General al-Bashir said he had also briefed President Hafiz al-Asad about Sudan's efforts to achieve peace in the south of the country. Both presidents also discussed the joint Sudanese-Syrian role in restoring Arab solidarity.

Sudan: 21 Presidential Candidates Claim Elections Not Fair

EA0303224696 (Clandestine) Voice of Sudan Voice of the National Democratic Alliance in Arabic 1715 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A group of 21 candidates for the presidency of the Republic has presented to the so-called election commission a memorandum expressing disappointment at not having been given equal opportunities with other candidates to express their views and election programs in the media.

In the statement, presented on 25 February, the group demanded the cancellation of the elections which, they said, were not fair or democratic. They also called for the establishment of a national government credible enough to hold fair and free elections.

Sources close to the general election commission said that the chairman of the commission, 'Abd-al-Muni'm al-Nahhas, has already submitted a report to the national assembly in which he has declared about 50 candidates as elected unopposed, and about 150 other candidates as having won a landslide victory in the elections.

Sudan: Deputy Leader of Opposition DUP Interviewed

MM0403155396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 3 Mar 96 p 5

[Unattributed interview with Sayyid Ahmad al-Husayn, deputy secretary general of the Sudanese Democratic Unionist Party, DUP, in Khartoum; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] There is a great deal of talk in the Sudanese arena at present about the question of accord [between the Government and the DUP]. What are the party's conditions for establishing such an accord?

[Al-Husayn] The word accord is being used by the leaders of the Salvation [Revolution] and leaders of the National Islamic Front [NIF] to mean that the door is open to individuals to join their regime, whereas it is closed to parties. In this context the word accord means, from the NIF's perspective, an accord with individual members of the people and not with organizations that represent these individuals, whatever the nature of these organizations might be. This definition is not one that I have devised but rather it is the way the regime understands it. In this sense, we in the DUP reject such accord.

We are fully prepared to enter into a national accord once the regime recognizes political parties and the sovereignty of the law, unleashes public freedoms, and brings a halt to the war. The call for accord has come after the regime has driven Sudan into labyrinths that are a natural byproduct of its policies. These policies have tightened the ring of isolation around Sudan and created hostility between it and the whole world.

The regime's concept of accord, after the tightening of the noose of isolation around it, cannot serve any useful purpose for Sudan. Even if the entire people were to join under the umbrella of the regime, this will not help to resolve the current problem because the current state of siege, the international hostility, and the dangers facing Sudan have nothing whatever to do with our internal conflicts. The main cause of the dangers threatening Sudan lies in the regime's foreign policy, attitudes, and actions.

However, despite all this, I say that the only solution that would save Sudan from the dangers threatening it

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lies in the regime's acceptance of the supremacy of the law. It is for this reason that we as Unionists reject the Salvationist accord.

What I wish to affirm in this regard is that we as a Unionist Party have not been contacted by the authorities. Shaykh al-Ja'li (one of the Sufi shaykhs in northern Sudan) recently asked to meet with me, but he put forward no vision of accord whatever. All he did was to put to me a brief and specific question, which was: What is happening to the country? My reply was that the country is surrounded by grave dangers threatening its unity and that it is being internationally targeted, and that the danger is there and the solution lies in the regime's lifting its guardianship over the people and its ban on parties and in its restoring democracy, and that there can be no other solution.

I went on to say to Shaykh al-Ja'li that we will not meet with this regime because its members lack all credibility and because, on their part, they prefer to meet with individuals so that they can politically and morally assassinate or kill them. The NIF regime and its members were at one time with us in one parliament. But they assassinated democracy under cover of night. We have no confidence in them and we cannot sit down with them.

I wish to say one last word with regard to the accord. There are some individuals, who do not represent the Unionist base, who have conducted some contacts with the regime. But these individuals represent nobody other than themselves and they may have their own personal motives. However, their fate will be like that of other individuals who preceded them in this regard. But the broad Unionist base adheres to its firm position and fully realizes where Sudan's interests lie. It believes that the affiliation of some individuals with the regime will not eliminate the dangers and it maintains the firm position about the need for the restoration of democracy.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] You have said that the government's call for accord is directed toward individuals. How successful has this call been?

[Al-Husayn] As is evident, the results of the government's policies have been the limitless suffering that the Sudanese people are living through at present. This suffering has gone beyond the imagination of even the most pessimistic. If this is the case generally, then the people will never respond to any call for accord with a government whose policies have been the cause of the painful state of affairs that penetrates all aspects of their lives.

Furthermore, the regime has antagonized all members of the people by its dismissal of employees and its tightening of restrictions on various commercial activities. How then can any member of the people accept any initiative from the regime?

If the current regime fails to address the painful realities of Sudan, whether in regard to the international and regional isolation or the limitless sufferings of the people, and refuses to deal with them, then the people's revolution will loom and the elimination of the regime will be imperative. The problem is that members of the regime do not sense the roaring of the Sudanese people, because they live in another world and are preoccupied with monopolies and bank loans.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Do you not think that the current state of siege is due to the government's Islamic orientation?

[Al-Husayn] The foreign attitude [toward Sudan] has nothing to do with religion or Islamic orientation. As Muslim citizens we say that the actions, the oppression, suppression, terrorization, and monopolization, have nothing whatever to do with Islam. We know Islam very well. The world's targeting of the regime is due to clear accusations which have never been leveled against the Sudanese people at all. On the contrary, the Sudanese citizen was widely accepted prior to 1989. The adherence of members of the people to Islam was better. Many Islamic countries apply Islam properly, such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but they have not been targeted. The countries which apply the teachings of Islam have not faced what Sudan is facing. Furthermore, Sudan has failed to apply any of these teachings since 1989.

The problem lies in bad policies, and the Sudanese people have been the first victims of these policies. I personally have suffered arrests, torture, and ill-treatment throughout the six years of the Salvation [regime]: 1989 through 1995. Even on 14 February 1996, security officials raided my home without due respect for its sanctity or its guests. What have such actions to do with Islam?

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Is there hope for a peaceful solution to the civil war in the near future?

[Al-Husayn] I can affirm that this regime has come to prevent the establishment of peace between the north and the south. Under the aegis of the last democratic government and in accordance with the Sudanese peace initiative, a meeting was scheduled to take place on 14 July 1989 between representatives of the government and the people's movement [Sudanese People's Liberation Movement] to sign a ceasefire agreement and fix a date for the convocation of a national conference to resolve the problem of the war.

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The NIF was the only party that opposed this, and so it timed its coup for 30 June 1989, to undermine the peace. Prior to the advent of this regime, all the peace initiatives were purely national ones and there was no international interference. However, after the advent of the current regime, the issue was internationalized. I can see no sign of a peaceful solution under the auspices of this regime. Because this regime tries to impose its own solutions on others. With the world's hostility to the regime and the internationalization of the problem, I cannot envisage any peaceful solution. I wish to point out that in talking about the problem, the regime pursues a two-pronged, contradictory line: The first is a religious line, through which it claims to be leading a religious war, and the second is political.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How do you view the widening of the circle of those demanding the right of self-determination for the south specifically?

[Al-Husayn] The government's persistence with its policies and its denial of others' rights to coexistence and expression will inevitably lead to the wronged people demanding their right to self- determination, and perhaps even the partitioning of the country.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Then how can the injustice be checked and Sudan's unity and stability preserved?

[Al-Husayn] Since its independence, Sudan has witnessed three military coups which ruled for longer periods than the democratic governments, so the democracies did not have sufficient opportunities to resolve the country's problems. Had sufficient opportunities been available, an adequate solution would have been reached. As to the military governments, their main concern was to impose solutions by military force, and so they impeded the peaceful solution of Sudan's problems, first and foremost the problem of the south. As Unionists, we believe that the return of democracy is the only way to the peaceful resolution of the problems.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Do you not think that the continuation of tension in Sudan might lead to foreign intervention?

[Al-Husayn] The foreign role has nothing to do with the problems of the people of Sudan or with the members of the Sudanese opposition, and those who believe that there is a connection and coordination between the opposition and foreign forces are unfamiliar with international designs. The active forces of the international community do not see any hurry for toppling the regime as we do. On the contrary, they prefer it to continue with its internal and foreign policies because it represents a negative model in the application of Islam. Despite all allegations to the contrary by members of the Salvation [regime], this method meets with rejection both inside and outside Sudan, and it will be difficult for any future regimes to consider the current regime as an authority [on the application of Islam] and as an example, so as to demand the setting up a similar model.

The current regime's persistence with its policies helps international forces to rearrange the conditions of racial and religious minorities to the maximum limit, including such things as secession and partition. The international forces have been pressuring the regime into taking a specific course to help them achieve their aforementioned objectives. Oddly enough, the regime's people have been actively working with strange enthusiasm for the implementation of the designs of the big powers.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Would it have been possible for the opposition to participate in the current elections in accordance with constitutional decree No. 13, which was described as an important democratic move?

[Al-Husayn] The Islamic constitutional decree No. 13 was neither Islamic nor democratic. The paragraphs it contained about the president of the republic stripped it of all Islamic character. Furthermore, the powers vested in him are purely dictatorial, as they depict him as being the source of everything. This constitutional order does not annul decree No. 3 which codifies the extraordinary laws now in force in the country.

The information clamor that accompanied the issuance of that decree [No. 13] is akin to the clamor raised in connection with the raising of the slogan of "We eat what we grow and we wear the clothes we make" [i.e. self-sufficiency]. But the people are now dying of starvation. Hence it is very difficult for anyone who cares about the homeland's good to close his eyes to the legal and political shortcomings inherent in that decree and participate in the farce of elections which is being cooked up by the authority over a blazing fire.

All the measures that accompanied the preparation of these elections were wrong and rash, starting with the register they called "the permanent register of electors." The names that were included in this register were derived from the lists of ration cards which are bedeviled by many shortcomings such as the registration by many people of family members who are abroad [to obtain extra ration cards]. There are also babies registered for cards...and so on and so forth. True democracy demands that those who have a genuine stake in the elections should supervise the registration operation.

Furthermore, the extraordinary laws that are in force prohibit the holding of public assemblies and the putting

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forward of manifestos. How can the people in government then ask us to participate in the elections? Let them first allow us to exercise our personal freedoms.

Finally, I ask, how can I participate in these elections when everyone is aware of the rigging operations that take place in the trade union elections? What guarantees do we have that no rigging will take place here too.... We do not even need to go far in our quest for reasons: The authorities could not bear to see a group of students who were opposed to them winning control over the Student's Union in Khartoum. How will they tolerate opposition politicians who would put forward programs that conflict with theirs?

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] The opposition abroad rules out any peaceful easing of the political situation in Sudan, and they have been talking of a popular uprising guarded by arms. What do you yourself think in this respect?

[Al-Husayn] We have nothing to do with what is being said abroad. We inside the country say that the rectification of conditions will take place from within and with the same methods that were used to rectify conditions in October 1964 and April 1985. This process will be protected by the regular forces in the country because they too have suffered harm. The regime itself has been committing a series of mistakes at a fast pace. These mistakes have been polarizing the indignation and revolution of the Sudanese people. For example, the regime has lifted its hand from, or rather stopped providing, all basic service whether in the field of health, education, or any other fields. I believe the Sudan is approaching an uprising from within enjoying protection from within.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] There is a view circulating within the opposition's ranks that the opposition abroad is more coherent and more organized than the opposition inside the country. How true is this?

[Al-Husayn] I wish to point out that the basic task of the opposition is to awaken and enlighten the people about the threat facing the country as a result of the regime's policies, thus ensuring the closing of the people's ranks in the face of the looming dangers. We inside Sudan believe that the people have now reached the stage of the closing of ranks, having been convinced that the regime no longer serves their interests. Thanks to the activities of the opposition, the people have now reached the conviction that the regime has failed to realize their ambitions, and it is because of this that I can affirm that the opposition exists and is active.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What do you think the international community will decide when the deadline set by UN Security Council Resolution 1044 expires?

[Al-Husayn] The aforementioned resolution of the international community and what followed, namely America's recall of its diplomatic mission, has destroyed all hopes the regime may have had about any possible reluctance or retraction on the part of the international community. In my estimation, the results of this state of affairs will essentially be reflected in the capabilities of the armed forces in the first place and in the tightening of comprehensive isolation of the regime in the second place. This will increase the sufferings of the Sudanese people. The regime is aware of these results, but continues to deceive itself and the others.

Other countries might take similar stands to that of the United States. Even if no public diplomatic recalls take place, a partial recall might take place without publicity. The objective causes behind the UN Security Council resolution are sure to bring about additional developments.

Tunisia

Tunisia: Iraqi Vice President Arrives in Tunis 4 Mar

JN0403140896 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1301 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, 4 Mar (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, vice president and President Saddam Husayn's special envoy to his brother Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, arrived here today.

Ramadan was received at Tunis Airport by Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia, Presidential Office Director Mohamed El Harbi El Wazir, several Tunisian officials, and Iraqi Ambassador in Tunis Munzir Ahmad al-Mutlaq and the embassy staff.

Tunisia: Egyptian Paper Reports Split in Ruling Party Ranks

NC0403160196 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 27 Feb 96 p 8

[Report by Jamal 'Arafah: "Serious Split in Tunisia's Ruling Party"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A serious split has taken place inside the ruling Destourian Socialist Party [DSP], led by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, in Tunisia.

A number of party members — whose names are not known but who are probably veteran founders of the party — have announced the formation of a new party

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or the return to the original name of the ruling party during the French occupation, that is the Free Tunisian Destourian Party. In their first statement, issued in Tunis on 16 February — of which AL-SHA'B has obtained a copy — they rejected President Ben Ali's rule and said they do not recognize the coup Ali led on 7 November 1987 against former President Bourguiba, whom they described as the current president's benefactor, leader of the liberation struggle, and builder of the modern Tunisian state.

The statement described the current political leadership as a (gang) that seized power following the coup staged by General Ben Ali, the agent of foreign intelligence services. It added that this gang liquidated what remained of the national liberation movement's heritage by excluding nationalist leaders from the DSP, and opening its doors to the remnant communists and all those hostile to Islam and the country's Arabism so that the country came under the rule of a clique alien to Tunisia and its history. This clique includes Masons, Baha'is, communists, the mafia, and agents of foreign intelligence services, especially the Zionist one.

Giving an example of corruption, the statement of the (The Free Destourian Party) said: The drug and white slave trade has prospered in Tunisia under the direct control of the Tunisian president's brother (Habib Ben Hamdah Ben Ali). The country's doors have been opened wide for foreign economic and military influence.

The statement also accused the current Tunisian government of treason. It said: It has plotted against the Palestinian cause and was involved in the assassination of martyr Abu-Jihad in the capital Tunis. It recently became involved in the assassination of martyr Fathi al-Shaqaqi by providing the necessary information about his movements and mission through (El Taher Dalaiqah), the official in charge of security at the Tunisian embassy in Libya.

The statement concluded by addressing an appeal to the Tunisian people, in which it said: What the ruling gang in Tunisia is doing is treason. It is opening the doors wide for the enemy. The real destourians are powerless and not happy with or responsible for the behavior of Gen. Ben Ali. They intend to expose this gang's actions before Tunisia's public opinion.

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Qatar-Saudi Arabia: Border Situation 'Extremely Tense'

MM0403162896 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Gulf Split Widening Rapidly; Tension Resumes on Saudi-Qatari Border"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI — Conditions in the Arab Gulf region have begun to deteriorate once again after the period of calm that followed the uncovering of the attempted coup in Qatar. It seems that the splits in the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] will widen in the coming days in the wake of the Qatari Government's refusal to receive Jamil al-Hujaylan, the new GCC secretary general, and Kuwait's public backtracking on its position of refusing to hold an emergency meeting of the GCC foreign ministers to discuss the said attempted coup. [passage omitted]

AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI has learned that the situation on the Qatari-Saudi border is extremely tense. Diplomatic sources in the Gulf say that Qatari deployments have been seen along the border, for fear of new infiltrations. These deployments have been made after four Saudi warplanes infiltrated Qatari airspace four days ago. The sources said that the elements involved in the coup attempt infiltrated the border through the area situated between Samrah and al-Khufus. When the operation was uncovered, they all fled to Abu Dhabi to deny any accusation of involvement leveled at Saudi Arabia and to put a strain on relations between the [United Arab] Emirates and the State of Qatar.

Many observers believe that the illness of the Saudi monarch, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, has created a big vacuum not only in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but in the Gulf region as a whole. And his sudden resumption of power has not helped to settle many of the outstanding issues. [passage omitted]

Bahrain

Bahrain: Amir 'Regrets' Recent Bombings in Israel

JN0503102896 Manama Bahrain Radio Network in Arabic 0935 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the amir of Bahrain, said he regrets the recent attacks against civilians in Israel. His highness noted that such acts do not serve the sincere efforts to realize a just peace and to achieve security and stability for the people and countries of the region.

This came during today's meeting between His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah and Gerald Pat, a writer and journalist for the British newspaper the DAILY TELEGRAPH. The meeting was attended by Muhammad Ibrahim al-Mutawwa', minister of cabinet affairs and information.

His highness the amir of Bahrain praised the good results of the current visit by His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah to the United Kingdom. This visit reflects the depth of Bahraini-British relations and their development in various fields. His highness noted the role played by the British community living in Bahrain in terms of various contribution's to the development of Bahraini society.

Kuwait

Kuwait: Assembly Postpones Formation of Investigating Committee

LD0203161296 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1512 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 2 Mar — The National Assembly agreed today to a request presented by more than 20 deputies to postpone for a week the formation of an investigating committee on contracts for supplying the Defense Ministry with food, provisions, equipment, and services at the government's request. [passage omitted]

The government had expressed objection to the formation of a parliamentary investigating committee over this issue, and stated that it would submit a clear reply to all the issues raised over those contracts through the Defense Ministry.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, acting prime minister [ra'is majlis al- wuzara' bi al-niyabah] and foreign affairs minister, said: "No one is capable of preventing the audit office from inspecting the accounts of any ministry." [passage omitted]

Kuwait: Bin Tifla—Inter-Gulf Relations 'Facing Turbulent Times'

JN0303205696 Kuwait KUWAIT TIMES in English 14 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Sa'd al-'Unayzi and Karim Qasim]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kuwait — Nobody can deny that the inter-Gulf relations are facing turbulent times right now with the proof being Qatar's boycott of the closing session of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] summit held last year in Oman. The problems and failures are not Kuwait's failures as such but they dash Kuwaiti hopes for strong and unified position of GCC countries concerning regional, Arab and international issues, remarked Dr. Sa'd Bin Tifla, advisor of the National Assembly Committee.

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Kuwait's hopes for a specific and clear cut policies of the GCC have not been fulfilled and it is not due to loopholes in Kuwait's foreign policy but rather due to inter-differences within the GCC countries, he added.

Speaking to KUWAIT TIMES, he emphasised that the GCC, as an organisation has not been up to the expectations and this has consequently reflected on the Kuwaiti foreign policy as a whole. This is not a mistake of Kuwait's foreign policy but that of the GCC as an organisation in general, he stressed.

On the occasion of the Fifth Liberation Anniversary, he also referred to certain subjective issues, such as the stand on the Iraqi regime. Kuwait wants to press ahead with the isolation of Iraq, such as the relations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), or the Jordanian regime, or even Yemen, but specifically with Jordan which represents the lung through which the Iraqi regime is breathing. [sentence as published]

All this is due to Kuwait's wish to tighten the noose further on Saddam Husayn and circumstances have forced Kuwait to adopt the policy "my enemy's enemy is my friend", he elaborated.

What Kuwait really wants, is a change in Jordanian stand it adopted during the occupation.

On the Arab level, he said he feels that there is a kind of subjective circumstance, in which Kuwait has no role in preserving the status quo, although it can be said that Kuwait was able to make penetrations in areas which were previously the playing grounds for the Iraqi regime and its apparatus, such as countries like Algeria, Tunisia, and Mauritania, who have started backing up from their previous stands.

He further commented that Kuwait cannot decide foreign policies as it wishes, no other country can, in any case do so, irrespective of its size and population.

Kuwait alone cannot find a separate foreign policy other than GCC countries. Arab relations are very delicate and same is for the Gulf. So, "I think most of the mistakes in the Kuwaiti foreign policy were not self-caused and not real ones", he added.

Answering a question on Qatar's and Oman's unilateral relations with Israel, he said, Qatar and Oman can take two positions, the first being represented in a unified Gulf stand, not to get into such events until and after the Syrian and Lebanese dimensions of the peace process are solved

The second is to support Syria's and Lebanon's negotiating positions, as it was announced during the meetings of the Damascus Declaration. Countries announced their support for the Syrian position in its just demands of implementing resolutions 242 and 425.

"In my opinion, the step is uncalled for and does not have any economic or political justifications", he said, adding that this is part of the problems GCC countries are facing and Kuwait has nothing to do with it.

About Iraq's participation in the negotiations for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 986, which allows Iraq to sell two million barrels of oil per day for humanitarian and food requirements, Dr. Bin Tifla said: I am not a spokesman for the Kuwait government, but honesty and truth must be presented which Kuwait has been demanding.

Kuwait has taken into consideration the humanitarian issue of the Iraqi people and its tragic effects on the children. Resolution 712 allows Iraq to sell part of its oil for humanitarian purposes, but the Iraqi regime refused the resolution.

He questioned why Iraq rejected Resolution 986 which was issued in 1994, until recently when it accepted to negotiate such a resolution. He added that one should not forget that Iraq took one year and four months to accept Resolution 833 in regards to the demarcation of borders and recognising the state of Kuwait.

"We are not saying this for propaganda purposes, because Kuwait has extended and still extends humanitarian aid for Iraq's children and refugees in Iran and northern Iraq, as testified by the International Red Cross and Kuwait Red Crescent, he stressed.

This has been said by Amana Sauson, who is a British MP. She established the Ammar Establishment for a 12-year-old Iraqi child who was burnt by chemical weapons.

She admits to various international parties that His Highness the Amir took the initiative more than once to assist these humanitarian entities which support children and this is something not new for Kuwait.

Kuwait: Gulf War Blamed for Increasing Desertification

JN0303203396 Kuwait ARAB TIMES in English 15-16 Feb 96 pp 1, 8

[Report by 'Umar Hasan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kuwait City, Feb 14 — A large number of dunes, formed as a result of military activity in the desert of Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion, are moving slowly but steadily towards the country's urban areas, threatening important economic installations and military bases, a top environmentalist said.

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Dr. Muhammad al-Sarawi, assistant professor of Geology at the Kuwait University, told the ARAB TIMES in an exclusive interview that hundreds of big and small sand dunes were posing a serious threat to vegetation, military camps, army bases and other economic installatio . This could prove to be disastrous unless effective methods to halt dunes advance were adopted.

Dr. al-Sarawi, who is also the chairman of the Environment Protection Society, spoke about the oil lakes and their danger to the environment and underground water and the Environment Atlas of Kuwait. He is also the director of the Kuwait Atlas project and an advisor to the National Assembly Environment Committee.

Dr. al-Sarawi said that over 11 per cent of Kuwait's area of 18,000 square kilometers is now covered with sand dunes, majority of which formed after the Iraqi invasion. "Before the invasion, we travelled for hours in the desert before seeing a dune. At present, just pass Jahra and you will find many of them," said Dr. al-Sarawi, who himself has been monitoring this phenomenon after the liberation.

"They are just 30 kilometers north of Jahra and inching closing towards the city, but their movement is too slow, a few meters every year," he said. However, new dunes are forming much easier than before the invasion, a fact that complicates the situation further.

Dr. al-Sarawi declined to reveal the number of dunes formed as a result of the invasion, but Dr. Faruq al-Baz, director of the Boston Center for Remote Sensing told the ARAB TIMES recently that the number was over 1,300. Dr. al-Sarawi said that the size of some is up to 150 meters long, 25 meters wide and between six to seven meters high. There are smaller dunes. In some areas, there are between 20 to 25 dunes within one square kilometer.

"We believe there is a new setup of dune fields, the first time ever this phenomenon appears in Kuwait. The amount of accumulation of sediments increased more than before. The number of sand dunes increased remarkably, too.

"The number and size of dunes will increase in the future. The dune fields travel and move in the desert environment and will consequently disrupt the ecosystem. They will migrate and cover the plantation also. Animals, especially reptiles will also suffer from the huger invasion of dunes," he stressed.

The economy will also suffer because of more desertification. Dunes are covering many army installations and bases, gardens, fences and others. The amount of desert is increasing in Kuwait because of dunes," he said.

He said that dunes started forming as a direct result of military machinery movement in the desert. "The movement of machinery on the desert surface creates what we call "a blow-out" of the sediments or damages the top layer of the desert which holds sand underneath. Tanks and other heavy vehicles greatly affected the top layer of the soil, making it loose. Such activity contributed greatly to the movement of huger quantities of sand and eventually lead to the formation of dunes," he said.

Dr. al-Sarawi called for urgent action to minimise the impact of dunes on the environment and the ecosystem as a whole. "We have to do something about it, because if it reaches the city, it will create a catastrophe. Huge sand dunes are just 30 to 55 kilometers north of Jahra. Movement of sand dunes is affecting economic installations like army bases, airports, water resources, power lines and others.

"It is a costly process to stop the movement of dunes. The solution lies in dune fixation and plantation. You have to fence dunes vertically with barbed wires. That requires a lot of money. Iraqis must be held responsible for this. Kuwait has either made a compensation claim or is about to make on this matter.

"I have been working as a scientist in this field for the last 20 years and have never seen any thing like this. Sand dunes are so huge. What we need now is a serious mapping of these dunes and we have to keep them under close watch. We have to monitor their movements and the amount of sediments and the dimensions of such fields," he emphasised.

Talking on the impact of the Iraqi invasion on the environment, Dr. al-Sarawi said that the main negative impact has been the disruption of the ecosystem. "I believe that the main change has been the disruption of the ecosystem in the desert, the interaction between the living and non-living. Once this state of stability is disrupted, a severe damage is done to the natural setup.

"This disruption was the main problem. Immediately after the liberation, the damage was very extensive, almost everything was dead. The soil was badly damaged. I think every one meter of the desert of Kuwait was affected by the movement of military machinery. They did not drive on the main roads only, they in fact went into the desert.

"Now, we are pleased that the desert has rehabilitated itself. This is a natural process. Good rainfall and as people stopped going to the desert, helped rehealing of the desert. It has retained old plants and new plants came up also. In some case, the healing is better than before because of the hydrocarbon and soot fallout. This

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has increased the fertility of the soil All these factors created a good atmosphere for plants to grow again," he added.

Dr. al-Sarawi said that although oil from oil lakes seeped to up to 3.5 meters deep into the ground, there is no imminent risk on underground water resources. He said that just below the ground, there is a thick hard layer called Caliche (Gatch) which is a highly impermeable layer which shields underground water.

"Over 20 million out of 22 million barrels were sucked out of 400 small and big oil lakes. What we have now is a thick oil layer causing tremendous harm to the environment both in winter and summer. In summer, oil softens due to the heat and comes to the surface once again thus allowing more hydrocarbons to evaporate. In winter, most of the lakes will be covered by water forming an emulsion thus making it difficult to go through those areas. Oil lakes have greatly affected the animals and plants of the desert.

"Oil lakes have also contaminated the soil of Kuwait by thick oil deposits and this requires great efforts and manpower to clean it. But the major disaster is the penetration of oil into the ground. A team of scientists from the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) is conducting a study on this issue.

"I studied this issue myself in the north and south as well. I found from over 100 dig-outs in the desert that the penetration was around seven centimeters in the south while in the northern fields oil reached 3.5 meters. Water is still below that, it is deeper than 7-20 meters.

"I believe it is not yet serious as oil has not reached water. Unless someone says oil has seeped into the underground water, it will remain safe. From my knowledge, I think water is safe now. There is no risk of contamination. I don't think there will be any risk in the future. Because just below the ground, we have a thick hard layer called Caliche layer (Gatch) which is Calcarious rocks, carbonate soil with hard sediments. It is a highly impermeable layer which protects underground water." he said.

Dr. al-Sarawi said that the Oil Lakes Committee, which was formed by the Ministry of Oil to assess the oil lakes, recommended the setting up of a national committee for cleaning the lakes. Al- Sarawi was a member of the committee which submitted its report to the National Assembly Environment Committee. He praised the great cooperation extended by the Kuwait Oil Company.

Talking on the Kuwait Environment Atlas Project, Dr. al-Sarawi, who is the director of the project in Kuwait, said the Atlas will be completed in June this year but will be available in the market six to either months later. The Atlas is financed by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science, KFAS and is being done in cooperation with KISR and Boston Center for Remote Sensing headed by Dr. Faruq al-Baz.

The Atlas, a unique project on Kuwait, will consist of articles and satellite images on 40 different topics. The topics, written and illustrated by renowned national scientists, are grouped in two main parts. The first talks about the natural setup of Kuwait and the second focuses on the impact of the Iraqi invasion on Kuwait.

"The main objective of the Atlas is to show Kuwait in satellite images. It will contain a considerable amount of information about the physical aspect of the natural resources on Kuwait.

"The Atlas will consist of mainly 10 major fields. We start with fisheries, biology, geology as geomorphology, rocks, soil, water resources, subsurface, major topographic surface, and others.

"It will show satellite images with illustrative maps on the natural setup of Kuwait. This part will have 25 different topics... fish, range land, biology, geology under which comes structure, stratography, economy, water, surface geology and subsurface. This part also includes geography of Kuwait... climate, dustfall, dust formation, temperature, rainfall, humidity, marine life, islands of Kuwait, water chemistry and oceanography," he explained.

Dr. al-Sarawi said the 150-page (52 x 30 cm) Atlas will show a great interpretation of geology, geography, chemistry, biology and political science. It will be written in Arabic and English.

The Atlas also shows dune formation in Kuwait and the Peninsula and other neighbouring countries. It will have illustrations on birds, fish, rocks and sediment formation. A unique chapter of the Atlas will shed light on the history of Kuwait in a geological scene.

"This topics will illustrate Kuwait in facts and figures, how the people started inhabiting Kuwait and how the state of Kuwait came into existence in a political and geographic way with illustrative maps of political Kuwait.

"It will have a historical map of Kuwait, how Kuwait developed and how the boundaries were recognised by other states like the Ottoman Empire. The maps will give perfect illustrations about how Kuwait developed in stages. Almost everything about Kuwait and Dr. 'Abdallah al-Ghunaym of Strategic Studies Institute contributed this study," he said. [sentence as published]

He added that Part Two of the Atlas talks about the impact of the Iraqi invasion with illustrations. "It talks

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about impact of the invasion on the soil of Kuwait and other natural setups using satellite images before and after the war to show and illustrate the differences. The satellite images were studied by Kuwaitis.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Chairs Cabinet Meeting

LD0403235996 Riyadh SPA in Arabic
2300 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jeddah, 4 Mar (SPA) — King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, presented his congratulations and those of the Government and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the State of Kuwait on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of its liberation from the claws of occupation of the Iraqi regime.

He expressed the hope that God will maintain for the amir, Government, and people of Kuwait the blessings of prosperity, security, and stability he bestowed on them.

The king called on the Iraqi regime to return all the Kuwaiti and other prisoners and implement all the UN resolutions concerning its aggression against Kuwait. He also expressed Saudi Arabia's pain with regard to the sufferings experiencd by the Iraqi people as a result of their rulers' insistence on not complying with the resolutions of international legality.

This was expressed at a session of the Council of Ministers which King Fahd chaired at al-Salam Palace in Jeddah this evening. [passage omitted]

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Iraq: Saddam Chairs Joint Command Meeting, Reviews Talks With UN

JN0503120496 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1125 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 5 Mar (INA)—President Saddam Husayn chaired a joint meeting of the Revolution Command Council and the Ba'th Party Iraq Command today.

The conferees discussed several political issues, including the results of the first round of dialogue [with the United Nations] and some of the positive results that were reached in this round. The necessary instructions were given to the delegation to pursue the dialogue in the second session scheduled to be held on 11 March.

Presidential Office Chief Ahmad Husayn Khudayr, Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih, and Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf attended the meeting. The head and members of the Iraqi delegation to the dialogue also attended part of the meeting.

Iraq: Extended Family Members Reject Saddam's Call For Meeting

MM0503115996 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 2 Mar 96 pp 1,4

[Unattributed report: "Iraqi President Fails in Attempt To Hold Family Meeting"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Informed Iraqi sources have revealed that the Iraqi president made attempts to arrange an extended family meeting aimed at achieving two objectives: First, to contain the rumors in the wake of the elimination of Husayn Kamil and some of his family members, and secondly to achieve a new balance in the Iraqi regime's family structure.

The sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that President Saddam tried to hold a meeting which would include the conflicting wings of some families related to his family. The meeting was to take place last Tuesday in Tikrit (120 miles north of Baghdad), but was canceled because of a boycott by some influential families in the city, President Saddam Husayn's birth place.

The sources were specific about three families which turned down President Saddam's invitation, namely al-Maslat, al-Nada, and al-Bu'amr. The three are related to the al-Majid family (Husayn Kamil's family), but do not have uncle-nephew relations with President Saddam.

President Saddam, like former President Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, relied on these families to occupy positions of power in the second rank of the army, general intelligence organs, and public security organs. Some of these families' members have held important diplomatic posts around the world over the last 20 years.

The informed Iraqi sources explained that the circle of boycotters of the meeting called by President Saddam was not limited to representatives of the other families. Saddam's half-brother, former Interior Minister Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan also refused to attend. The sources explained Watban's boycott of the meeting by saying that he has refused to attend any family council or meeting attended by the president's eldest son, 'Udayy, who previously shot and wounded him (Watban) in the foot during an altercation last August. In addition, Sab'awi Ibrahim al-Hasan, the other half-brother, has withdrawn to his farm in al-Sawirah (30 miles south of Baghdad), to express his dissatisfaction with President Saddam's decision to remove him from his post as director of public security last September.

In explaining why the meeting was boycotted and failed, the sources said that the families that were invited to send representatives wanted to distance themselves from the al-Majid family's cycle of bloody conflict. These families felt that there was a danger in the attempt at dragging them in to counterbalance the al-Majid families.

Iraq: Paper Views Iraqi, U.S. Losses During 1991 Gulf War

JN0103214696 Baghdad INA in English 1340 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, March 1, INA—An Iraqi analyst has said American propaganda during the military aggression against Iraq in 1991 sought to exaggerate Iraqi losses while playing down losses suffered by U.S. forces.

Writing in AL-QADISIYAH daily, Hamid Yusuf Hammadi said the Pentagon has only disclosed one fifth of U.S. losses. Meanwhile, it concealed the remaining four fifths in secret files.

A short time after cease-fire which was unilaterally called by the Americans, information started to emerge in the world press and publications about the fighting capabilities of the Iraqi Armed Forces and the resilience they have shown, and although the western analysts did not refer to this fact openly, a clever reader would trace the zeal manifested by the Iraqi Army in facing to the sophisticated military buildup.

What the western military analysts ignored was the ideological education of the Iraqi officers and soldiers which was started during the Saddam's al-Qadisiyah (Iraq-Iran war) by President Saddam Husayn who taught

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the fighters not to overestimate or underestimate enemy power.

The marginal difference between the U.S. pilot and his Iraqi counterpart is that the former was a human part of his aircraft and its electronic programming, and it is true that he was a professional military programmed to hate the Arabs, their heritage and religion as well as to hate the Iraqi people and their leader Saddam Husayn.

American pilots were programmed to defend the biggest objective in the region, that is cheap Arab oil.

Iraqi pilots and air defense staff were, meanwhile, convinced that the American who came from a country ten thousand kilometers away is an aggressor who sought to destroy this country and its people and to take Iraq back to enslavement by the imperialists and Zionists.

Therefore the Iraqi soldier was not defending something thousands of kilometers from his land. Rather he was defending his country, identity and honor. That is why the Americans needed to mobilize the armies of 41 states to attack Iraq.

Iraq: French Diplomat Sees Possibility of Expanding Cooperation

JN0303140896 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0825 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 3 Mar (INA)—[Jean-Francois] Nodinot, head of the French interests section in Baghdad, has asserted that there is a big possibility to strengthen and develop ties of cooperation between Iraq and France in the field of higher education and scientific research.

In a statement published by AL-JUMHURIYAH here today, the French diplomat said the visit by Mr. Aroar [name as transliterated], director general of technical and scientific affairs at the French Foreign Ministry, and the talks he will hold with Iraqi officials in Baghdad, confirm the French trend to expand scientific cooperation between the two countries.

He added that the talks between Iraq and France aim at signing scientific and cultural agreements with Iraqi universities.

Dr. Humam 'Abd-al-Khaliq, minister of higher education and scientific research, yesterday received the French official and his delegation. They discussed scientific and cultural cooperation between the two countries.

Iraq: RCC Guidelines on National Assembly Election Campaigns

JN0203090196 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic 15 Feb 96 p 4

[Guidelines issued by the higher commission supervising National Assembly elections on election campaigns]

[FBIS Translated Text] In accordance with the provisions of Article 46 of National Assembly Law No. 26 of 1995, the Higher Commission Supervising Elections in Iraq decided to issue the following guidelines:

First: The Ministry of Culture and Information shall insure election campaigning means for all National Assembly candidates by providing them access to the different news media and guaranteeing them equal opportunity to use these media.

Second: Local papers shall publish once only a special election supplement, whose expenses shall be covered by the state and its price fixed by the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH.

Third: Baghdad Television and Youth Television shall assign a program to present what is published in the local papers about the candidates, including their pictures and short biographies, provided program time is announced in advance to enable the citizens in the different constituencies to watch what the television presents on their candidates. The price of the program shall be fixed by Baghdad Television.

Fourth: The publicity committees in the governorates shall undertake the following tasks:

1. Hold election rallies for candidates in cooperation with the quarters concerned. In these rallies, candidates shall be given the freedom to make speeches to introduce themselves to the citizens and speak about their national activities, good deeds for society, sacrifices for the people, and contributions to Saddam's glorious al-Qadisiyah and the historic Mother of Battles, and also explain their inclinations within the framework which backs the general trends of the revolution. The rallies will be a means to discover the capabilities of every candidate, including his ability to tackle political issues. They will also be an opportunity for the voters to debate the points contained in the candidate's speech. The assignment of these rallies will taken into consideration in regard to the number of polling stations in each constituency.

2. Prepare campaign posters for candidates in equal number.

3. Print publicity pictures for candidates through al-Hurriyah Printing House in equal size and number.

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4. Print cards for candidates through al-Hurriyah Printing House in equal number.

5. Publish the names and pictures of candidates, mention their titles as given in the nomination applications, and present equal synopses on their biographies on the basis of constituencies. Names shall be listed in alphabetical order.

6. Print the candidates' election statements through al-Hurriyah Printing House in equal number and post copies of these statements outside polling stations. The candidate shall be given the right to refer in his election statement to issues which he aspires to achieve for the constituency in which he is nominated. The candidate's statement must not contain concepts which conflict with the letter and spirit of the constitution and the law.

Fifth: A list of the candidates for all constituencies shall be broadcast and published in the local papers two days before the election. This is in addition to what is mentioned in Paragraph 5 of the "Fourth" clause above.

Sixth: News media shall stop reporting on the activities of the party or administrative candidate during the election campaign and confine themselves to reporting on what has been decided within the context of the election campaign.

Seventh: The candidate shall refrain from violating the principle of equal opportunity for candidates by referring to his financial assets.

Eighth: Each candidate has the right to form a committee whose membership shall not exceed the number of polling stations in the constituency to help him with his campaigning tasks, provided that he informs the governorate and the publicity committee about their names in writing.

Ninth: All government and private sector printing houses are banned from printing pictures, cards, and election statements for National Assembly candidates unless they are officially requested to do so by the publicity committees in Baghdad and the other governorates.

Tenth: Each publicity committee shall prepare an account of the sums it has spent on the election campaign of each candidate and submit it to the Higher Commission Supervising Elections in Iraq within a maximum period of one month from election day.

Eleventh: Any candidate violating the legal provisions concerning election campaigning in National Assembly Law No. 26 of 1995 or these guidelines shall expose himself to cancellation of his candidacy by this commission in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 2 of Article 49 of the law and to accountability under other laws.

Twelfth: The commission may issue whatever facilitates the implementation of these guidelines and becomes part of them.

[Signed] 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council, RCC, and chairman of the Higher Commission Supervising Elections in Iraq.

Iraq: Justice Minister on Arrangements to Supervise Elections

JN0103131096 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic 13 Feb 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad (INA) — Shabib Lazim al-Maliki, minister of justice and member of the higher commission supervising National Assembly elections, said that all adequate measures have been taken to guarantee a democratic atmosphere to enable voters to cast their votes in complete freedom. In a statement to the Iraqi News Agency, the minister explained that the ministry has assigned 1,516 magistrates and public prosecution members as well as officials and jurists from the Ministry of Justice and other ministries to supervise the 1,464 polling stations located in 52 constituencies throughout the country in accordance with Articles 29 and 30 of National Assembly Law No. 26 of 1995 which organize the chairmanships of constituency committees and election committees in the polling stations.

The minister said that in accordance with Article 18 of the National Assembly law, 12 February was the last day for accepting nominations following the expiration of the 20-day period for submitting such nominations. This period began on the date of the republican decree which fixed the election day.

The minister said that in accordance with Article 32 of the National Assembly law, the names of the candidates will be announced at least 21 days before election day on 24 March.

On the subject of election campaigning, the minister explained that campaigning will begin on the day following the announcement of the names of the candidates, and end 24 hours before the actual voting starts in accordance with Paragraph "First" of Article 49 of the Assembly law.

The minister expressed the confidence of the Higher Commission Supervising the Elections in Iraq that the 24 March elections will be a significant occasion for our great people to assert their awareness of and faith in democracy which, he said, found a historic turning point on the great march day on which the people

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expressed their solidarity with the leader and sponsor of the democratic process, struggler President Saddam Husayn.

Iraq: Justice Minister on Plans To Hold Assembly Elections

JN0503065096 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1550 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 4 Mar (INA)—Names of 698 candidates for the National Assembly elections were declared today by Justice Minister Shabib Lazim al-Maliki. The elections are to take place on 24 March to fill 220 seats.

At a seminar of the heads of the election centers, Justice minister al-Maliki, who is also a chairman of the Higher Committee Supervising the National Assembly Elections, said that the election campaign will start today and will end 24 hours before the start of the vote casting in implementation of Article 49 of the National Assembly Law.

He also said that measures were taken to secure a democratic atmosphere and enable the voters to freely cast their votes with the help of 516 supervisors, including judges, members of the General Prosecution, and employees of the Justice Ministry and other ministries, who are in charge of 1,464 centers distributed on 52 constituencies throughout Iraq.

He pointed out that 40 members from the Autonomous Region would not stand in the elections in implementation of Article 88 of National Assembly Law No. 26 of 1995, which authorizes the Revolution Command Council to postpone the elections until normal situation is restored in that region. The law also authorizes the president of the republic to extend the terms of the former Assembly members or to appoint new members from the region.

Iraq: SAIRI Official Explains Damascus Opposition Meetings

NC0203200696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 2 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Bayan Jabr, Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, SAIRI, representative in Syria, in Damascus, by Mahdi Hasan, in Tehran, on 2 March; from the "News and Reports" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] Mr. Bayan Jabr, it seems that the Arab nationalist trend and the Islamic trend in the Iraqi opposition have ended their meetings. As the main participant in this meeting, would you tell us what topics you discussed and what results you achieved?

[Jabr] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The coordination and follow-up committee of the Islamic and pan-Arab trends [in the Iraqi opposition] held its meetings in Damascus over the past three days. The conferees discussed several topics including: First, a mechanism for relieving the Iraqi people. Several proposals were discussed to provide food and medicine directly to our Iraqi people via neighboring countries, without this material going through the regime's authorities, who use ration cards to pressure our people. This will also solve the problem of poor distribution of food and medicine by the regime. Some regions are receiving large quantities of food while others are deprived of it.

The second topic was a mechanism to implement His Eminence [SAIRI Leader Muhammad Baqir] al-Hakim's proposal on the importance of field action inside Iraq. Timetables and mechanisms were worked out to support the field action that was started by the revolutionaries in the southern marshlands, near al-'Amarah Governorate. The revolutionaries launched a large-scale attack through which they confronted the Fourth Corps Division.

Third, the conferees discussed the regional situation and how to employ regional efforts to support the Iraqi opposition, unify its ranks, and help it work in the field inside Iraq.

[Hasan] Speaking of the regional position, King Husayn of Jordan reiterated that he will play a role in changing the situation in Iraq, as he claimed. How does the Iraqi opposition, the Islamic trend in particular, view King Husayn's assertions?

[Jabr] We in the Iraqi opposition have called on all states of the region and the rest of the world to support the Iraqi opposition politically to get rid of Saddam Husayn's regime. We, therefore, welcome every regional effort that would help our Iraqi people get free of this dictator and this ruling gang. Over the many years of this gang's rule, our people have made huge sacrifices and the infrastructure of the Iraqi economy and the Iraqi Army were destroyed. We now believe that regional roles have started to complement each other to get rid of this dictator.

[Hasan] But, Mr. Bayan, observers stress that the Jordanian role is being played as part of the American-Zionist coordination and within the framework of a Zionist plan for Iraq. What do you think?

[Jabr] We adopt a nationalistic position and consider the Iraqi opposition the side concerned with creating change in Iraq. At the same time, we welcome any

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regional effort. But the change will be the responsibility of the sons of Iraq, the people of Iraq, the mujahidin in the south, north, center, east, and west. We are not concerned with, and we will not allow or accept any other role except that of the people of Iraq. The Iraqi people are the party concerned with this change.

[Hasan] Thank you, Mr. Bayan Jabr.

[Jabr] You are welcome.

Iraq: Decree Fixes Payments in Lieu of Military Service

JN0403150096 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Revolution Command Council has issued a new decree fixing the amount of money to be paid in lieu of compulsory military service at 750,000 dinars and in lieu of reserve service at 1 million dinars, as of the issuance date of the decree.

Iraq: Minister—Prices of Agricultural Products Will Not Change

JN0103133796 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 13 Feb 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Agriculture Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Ilah Hamid affirmed that the ministry will continue to adopt the valuable concepts contained in leader President Saddam Husayn's 2 December 1995 message and their positive results. Addressing a plenary meeting of agricultural officials from the ministry and its departments, the minister said the prices of agricultural products in 1996 will remain the same as they were in the previous year from the value aspect and that their purchasing power may even become stronger than in the past. The minister added that the ministry is in the process of fixing profitable prices for agricultural products during the coming phase in light of government support and determination to further develop the agricultural sector and improve the living conditions of peasants.

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Israel: Plans by Ministers Include Cabinet Change, Military Action

TA0403185996 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1840 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Report by 'Imanu'el Rosen at the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv where the cabinet is in emergency session — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] The cabinet meeting is continuing. There is a feeling like an emergency situation, a feeling that we are on the eve of war.

I have very important information about the consultations held prior to the cabinet meeting between Ministers Hayim Ramon, Ehud Baraq, and Yosi Beilin. The three senior ministers held private consultations and decided to present Prime Minister Shim'on Peres with three proposals:

First, to appoint Ehud Baraq defense minister and Ramon foreign minister;

Second, to establish a national unity government;

And third, for Shim'on Peres to make a decision to initiate a major military operation in the Gaza Strip.

I repeat, these proposals were raised in consultations between the government's three senior ministers.

A very spirited demonstration is currently in progress outside the Defense Ministry.

Israel: Cabinet Decides To Suspend Talks With Syria

TA0403190896 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1858 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Several decisions made at the extraordinary cabinet session tonight have been leaked. The first decision we managed to obtain is that the negotiations with Syria, which were due to restart at Wye Plantation this week, have been suspended. Uri Savir and the Israeli delegation to the talks with Syria are returning home.

Israel: Peres Spokesman Denies Cabinet Reshuffle Being Considered

TA0403194496 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1925 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Report by Udi Segal at the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv where an extraordinary cabinet meeting is in progress — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] In recent hours we have received Labor announcements and all sorts of speculation, which are still possibilities, although the current assessment is that Shim'on Peres will not approve them. For instance, the appointment of Ehud Baraq as defense minister. Here is Avi Bnayahu, media adviser to Mr. Peres as defense minister:

[Bnayahu] I wish to make it absolutely clear in the name of Shim'on Peres, prime minister and defense minister, who since early this evening — since the terrible tragedy occurred — has been holding a series of defense consultations, which continued with a cabinet meeting, that following reports in the media, the prime minister and defense minister wants to make it absolutely clear that he is currently not involved in any political issues or anything involving cabinet portfolios. The only issue on the agenda is the defense issue. Other unauthorized reports referred to options for action and political compositions and these are solely the responsibility of those reporting them. To repeat, this statement is being made in the name of the prime minister and defense minister.

Israel: Cabinet Meeting Ends; Special Headquarters Set Up

TA0403204896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2007 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Report by Shlomo Raz from the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Raz] The special cabinet meeting which was held here has just ended. The ministers are now leaving the Prime Minister's Office here. Minister Mikha Harish, we are on live relay for Qol Yisra'el. What has the Israeli Government decided?

[Harish] The headquarters which I asked for all along has been established, under Major General Ayalon. This is an antiterror war headquarters. This is the main decision made by the government today. The headquarters has been authorized to act everywhere, using all means, without any limitation on regions.

[Raz] Beyond the special decision to set up a headquarters, what else does the government intend to do?

[Harish] This headquarters includes all branches, but it has been focused today and has a commander to lead it. A single person is directly responsible for it. This has been my demand for quite a while. Up until 10 days ago I was told it was not necessary to have this.

[Raz] Minister Mikha Harish, what other decisions were made? Is there an intention to deport? Is there an intention to demolish houses, and to enter areas A and B?

[Harish] There was a series of decisions which were raised as proposals, but ultimately speaking, the opera-

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tional decision which was made in the course of the special session — it was not raised at the beginning — was to establish the headquarters and authorize it to adopt the necessary measures, including all these options, all measures that have been mentioned here, regarding houses, deportations if necessary, a closure, and so forth and so on. A freedom of operation has been given.

[Raz] I understand there is an intention to introduce IDF [Israel Defense Forces] units into Area B.

[Harish] What matters is that this headquarters now has the freedom of action to carry out the necessary operations.

[Raz] Was a proposal on introducing military forces into Gaza raised?

[Harish] Such operational specifics were not raised.

[Raz] Minister Harish, is it possible that a national unity government will be set up?

[Harish] There were no political deliberations. There was only a security discussion about the operations which should be adopted in the framework of the war against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terror.

[Raz] Will emergency regulations be activated?

[Harish] There are emergency regulations. We find ourselves at a time of emergency regulations indeed. All legal powers involved are at our disposal.

[Raz] When will Hamas members be deported and where to?

[Harish] There may yet be security consultations tonight, but the main point is that we have a special, unified headquarters for war against terrorism.

[Raz] Did the security elements report any possibilities or organizing for additional attacks?

[Harish] No, but let me tell you that everyone's feeling is that Hamas is making a supreme effort at the moment, has escalated the situation to the level of total war, and we therefore see ourselves in a total war against Hamas.

[Raz] What hand is guiding all these attacks?

[Harish] Hamas, Hamas and its perpetrators.

[Raz] Is it clear exactly who?

[Harish] No, it is impossible to elaborate.

Israel: Peres News Conference on Antiterror Measures

TA0403210496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2033 GMT 4 Mar 96

[News conference by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and IDF Chief of Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahaq at the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Peres] To the State of Israel, to the entire public, to our many friends abroad, but mainly in our own hearts — as in the previous cases — the pain is mostly that of the families of the victims, many of them young people. [sentence as heard] Many of the casualties are still in the hospital. At the same time, despite the fact that we have experienced one difficult day after another, I feel it is my duty to maintain a responsible and orderly hold on the issues of state and security. I must not let myself be led solely by emotions — although I can understand the emotions felt by everyone. I too have such feelings. However, I must manage affairs after giving them careful and thoughtful consideration on the basis of the best professional advice I can receive.

I want to state at this point that as a result of the decisions we have already adopted, the Palestinian Police have detained those who organized the last three attacks in Jerusalem and Ashqelon. Today we have a clear picture of what happened.

This evening, after I learned about this terrible tragedy in Tel Aviv, I came to this city and convened the heads of the defense establishment, the chief of staff and his staff, the public security minister, the police commissioner, the Shin Bet chief, and my antiterrorism adviser. We gave careful consideration to all the professional and responsible advice that is worthy of consideration. I can tell you that almost all the operative advice given was accepted by me — there were one or two suggestions I could not approve for to legal reasons. I brought these proposals to the cabinet meeting that was held later. After further consultations with the chief of staff and my cabinet colleagues I made the decision to establish a special headquarters, not just for fighting terrorism, but for fighting suicide terrorism.

We should distinguish between the terrorism we have known in the past and the terrorism we are currently facing, which is a special form of terrorism apparently requiring special measures. I was asked where will we operate. My answer is that we will operate everywhere. I was asked whether we will violate the law. There is one law that we will not violate — the law of the national and private security of Israel. A country is

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legally entitled to defend itself. This is the main law I intend to honor.

We have decided to establish an antiterror headquarters, and at the head of this headquarters we placed one of the most excellent officers I know, who has just retired from the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and has been appointed Shin Bet chief, reserve Major General 'Ami Ayalon. We decided to provide him with all the tools and told him he can act anywhere in order to strike, punish, and harm the perpetrators of this horrible terrorism — the members of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad. A la guerre comme la guerre, and I know that in war there are not only victories — sometimes we are also hurt, but I hope that we all stand together with heads raised and with a clear vision of what can be done and what can't be done, even while we have tears in our eyes. We will do what we can and will reject vain talk.

I believe we will overcome. I would have liked it to be easier going, with less sorrow and fewer victims, but this does not depend on any of us. I can envisage the right way to overcome this form of war as well. We have overcome many wars — conventional wars and wars of terrorism. Now we are facing a war against suicide terrorists. We will reach every place where this distorted form of terrorism is sending out its roots.

Throughout the day I received many calls. A short time ago I held a long talk with the president of the United States, who said that the United States will do whatever it can. I directed his attention to the Syrian angle and to the demands we have on 'Arafat. The latter said he has detained four persons included on the list of names we gave him, and that he is continuing to carry out house-to-house searches and will continue these detentions. I also asked the president to urgently provide us with equipment for discovering explosives and other means as well.

Among other things, we decided to carry out administrative detentions against anybody connected with terrorism. We decided to deal with every village from which suicide terrorists have come or will come.

As you all know, early this morning the IDF raided al-Fawwar, the village from which two suicide terrorists came. It carried out house-to-house searches and conducted detentions as required. The houses of the families of the terrorists will be sealed and later demolished. This is a war in which we will act with great determination and force. It is a defensive war, and the State of Israel is permitted, and in fact obligated, to behave in this manner.

I want to tell you that despite the great hardship and deep sorrow, I find that our security bodies are functioning properly; things are being carefully considered, and everything that has to be done on an immediate basis is being done immediately, while whatever has to be done over a longer term will be done in the required time frame.

[Qol Yisra'el's Shlomo Raz] Mr. Prime Minister, doesn't the decision to allow freedom of action to the IDF, to the security forces everywhere, endanger the continued existence of the Oslo accords, of the negotiations with the Palestinians, of the reality that the Oslo accords have created in fact?

[Peres] The Oslo accords do not forbid us from engaging in self-defense.

[Television 1's Nisim Mish'al] The public today has hard feelings, I would even say feelings of helplessness. Do you, sir, think that you can cope with this new terror by suicide bombers?

[Peres] My answer is an unequivocal yes, but I would not like to describe myself as a unique man. I head a security system in which I have full confidence, which includes the best people in the State of Israel, and we act as a team, although responsibility, especially for the difficult things, is mine.

[Mish'al] Can I understand from your remarks, sir, that the IDF can also enter the areas where the Palestinian Authority [PA] is in control?

[Peres] What you can infer from my remarks is that I have specified what needs to be specified, and what I do not think I should specify, I have not.

[Raz] Mr. Prime Minister, you said that we know who perpetrated the attacks in Jerusalem and Ashqelon....

[Peres, interrupting] I did not say so, Shlomo, excuse me. I said that people were detained, that those who instructed the suicide bombers are today in Palestinian Police detention.

[Raz] Is there a guiding hand behind the whole recent wave of terrorism, including today's attack in Tel Aviv?

[Peres] We do not have accurate details on today's attack in Tel Aviv yet. As for the previous three attacks, the answer is yes, there was a guiding hand indeed.

[Qol Yisra'el's Arye Golan] Mr. Prime Minister, there were reports this evening about a political intention to replace you as defense minister and to entrust this portfolio to Ehud Baraq. The reports emanated from many Labor sources and were broadcast this evening. What is your reaction to these reports?

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The second question: Don't you think that you might have been able to adopt all these operations, which you decided on over the last 24 hours, before the attacks? These decisions, this determination to fight the terror perpetrated by the suicide bombers — why didn't you make these decisions before Israel was hurt so badly?

[Peres] As for the first question, I didn't see or hear the reports you attribute to Labor sources. Therefore, I don't know about either the reports or the sources. All evening long I dealt with those matters which I should deal with. I don't trust such reports. There is always speculation, and it is not relevant to the subject matter at hand at the moment.

Every attack requires an analysis and the enhancing of means. In every war, you might ask why things which were done on the last day of the war were not done on its first day. This is because the more the war evolves, the more the countermeasures evolve. This is the case everywhere in the world.

[IDF Radio's Udi Segal] Can you conduct this war you're talking about against the suicide bombers at election time? Isn't it time now to announce the postponement of the elections due to the new situation which has emerged?

[Peres] Look, to answer you with full sincerity, I think I must not mix politics with the current campaign. I am now truly and seriously, with full concentration and attention, dealing with the grave situation. When we have time to breathe a little, we will discuss other matters too. Right now, I am fully focused on this issue.

[Mish'al] Following your announcement about the establishment of the special antiterror headquarters, can the Israeli nation feel relaxed, knowing that the difficult terror problem is about to be solved?

[Peres] I think that Israel can feel relaxed from the viewpoint that we are enlisting anything and anybody we can. I believe we will win. To my great regret, I can't say that from now on everything will go right, that there will be no more strikes. This would be irresponsible on my part. What I can say though, and with certainty, is that we will overcome this. We are recruiting everything and everybody we can, and there are wonderful, experienced, and daring people in this country. There is no such thing as inability to solve this problem. We will solve....

[Mish'al, interrupting] Where were these people up until now, sir?

[Peres] It was unnecessary until now. There were six quiet months. These people have been there all the time, in and out of uniform, and incidentally, they have done an excellent job.

[HA'ARETZ' Eytan Rabin] Did you also consider the deportation of Hamas' activists? When you talk about administrative detentions, when will they begin?

[Peres] The administrative detentions have already started. Yesterday, immediately following the cabinet decision, about 1,000 soldiers arrived in Jerusalem. The city, it seems to me, is much calmer and much better guarded. The soldiers came to the bus stops and to the buses. Just as we decided yesterday, this morning a curfew was imposed on the al-Fawwar refugee camp, and last night, the people who organized the three suicide attacks were detained. We will not delay anything; we will continue full steam ahead.

[Television 2's 'Imanu'el Rosen] Mr. Peres, you said that the PA [Palestinian Authority] detained four people, those which Israel....

[Peres, interrupting] I did not mention a figure.

[Rosen] You said a number of people.

[Peres] Yes.

[Rosen] In the past we witnessed a rather faltering war against terror by the PA; they used to detain and release people repeatedly. This is the impression we received. Have you not lost confidence in Yasir 'Arafat, the PA's head, sir?

[Peres] My trust is in the IDF, if you are talking about full trust. Still, when I ask myself, at this difficult moment, what is preferable, whether is it better for the PLO to resume terror, for Israel be thrown back into the intifadah days, and for suicide attacks come on top of the intifadah, my well-considered opinion is that it is better to have the PLO outside the cycle of terror, it is better that the intifadah does not return, and that we make a concentrated effort, with as much help as the Palestinians can extend, to overcome terror.

[Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq] At present we have large forces in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. We are constantly holding a dialogue with the Israel Police and will help it in its area of jurisdiction — in Jerusalem — in doing whatever is required. Along with the Shin Bet we will do whatever has to be done. This is what I have to say at present.

[Segal] Mr. Chief of Staff, do you think that the measures adopted by the government yesterday and today provide a foolproof answer to the problem of suicide terrorists?

[Shahaq] Look, I do not have an absolute answer to the problem of suicide terrorists. The problem is not with

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what is permitted, but rather who we will have to reach. We will reach the suicide terrorists and those who send them. I only hope we will do so before the next attack.

[Mish'al] Mr. Chief of Staff, did you receive from the government all the tools and options to act against this new wave of terrorism?

[Shahaq] Let me repeat, the problem is not one of tools or what is permitted, but to know how to strike at terrorism wherever it is found. This is what we are striving to attain.

[Raz] Mr. Chief of Staff, do you still have warnings about the possibility of more attacks of the kind we have seen over the last few days? Aren't you concerned that these attacks will continue — seeing that Hamas has warned that if the steps against it are exacerbated the attacks will continue?

[Shahaq] I don't think that Hamas or Islamic Jihad doesn't want to hurt us anymore. I believe they will continue their attempts, and this is the situation we have to deal with.

[Unidentified correspondent] Did the army cancel scheduled training in order to transfer forces to Jerusalem and other places?

[Shahaq] Look, our most important mission right now is to put an end to this phenomenon and to hurt all those responsible for it. This is at the top of our list of priorities, coming before anything else. So the answer to your question is positive.

Israel: Peres Briefs Weizman, Would 'Welcome' National Unity Effort

TA0503055396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the middle of the night, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres met with President 'Ezer Weizman at the presidential residence in Jerusalem. Following his meeting with the president, the prime minister said this is the time to bring together terrorism experts from both the left and the right.

Peres said he did not discuss the possibility of a national unity government with the president; however, he told reporters that if someone is able to coordinate the effort, he would welcome it.

Israel: Proceedings of 4 Mar Cabinet Session Detailed

TA0503101096 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 5 Mar 96 pp 2, 3

[Report by Ben Kaspit]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The cabinet meeting that was held yesterday evening, only a few hours after the horrendous suicide attack at Dizengoff Center, was one of the hardest in the history of the state. Defense establishment leaders made it clear to the government that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] does not have a real operational option against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the suicide bombers. The general feeling was one of helplessness. Ministers leveled harsh criticism at the IDF. The prime minister was tense and pale. Many ministers recalled a previous meeting at the defense minister's office in Tel Aviv exactly four months prior to yesterday's meeting. That was the meeting that followed Rabin's murder.

At the beginning of the meeting, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres submitted to the ministers a document with a draft proposal. Most of the ministers, in a rare move of protest against the prime minister, rejected the document. "It included all sorts of marginal measures, such as sealing several houses, closing down Hamas institutes in Jerusalem, imposing a curfew on villages, and conducting a few administrative detentions," one of the ministers told MA'ARIV yesterday. "We could not understand how the prime minister could think that the nation would buy these measures."

"We are at war," the ministers told Peres, "and in war anything goes." Later, the prime minister used this very expression in front of the television cameras. Under pressure from the ministers, Peres left for consultations with Shin Bet head 'Ami Ayalon and Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq. Upon his return, he brought to the ministers the proposal to set up a supreme headquarters for the war against terrorism.

Again, the prime minister's proposal was not received with great enthusiasm. Minister Shetrit, for example, talked about "wiping out villages, flattening whole streets with bulldozers, conducting mass deportations and mass detentions, and using the IDF everywhere, including the Palestinian Authority [PA] areas." Other ministers, such as Ora Namir, supported most proposals: "The army must be activated. What is happening with 'Arafat? What has he done since last Sunday [25 February]? It is about time we did something to defend the people."

Many ministers opposed Peres' proposal that the operational powers of the antiterror headquarters be limited to

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Areas B and C only. "We need to make decisions today as if three more attacks had already taken place and not wait until they happen," Minister Ya'aqov Tzur said. "In the war against Hamas, there are no areas. There are no Areas A, B, and C. We have to hit them everywhere."

Under pressure from the ministers, Peres agreed not to include a territorial definition of the powers of the supreme headquarters on the understanding that "the forces will operate wherever required." The ministers also pressed to add to the decision the stipulation that the supreme headquarters will have unlimited powers. The ministers also proposed that the document of decisions submitted by the prime minister not be made public and that the public be apprised only of the decision on the establishment of the headquarters.

Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer demanded that the government wake up and listen to the street. "You do not hear what is happening in the streets," Ben-Eli'ezer said. "We must satisfy public opinion. The time has come to act." Minister Efrayim Sne called for a decision identical to that made after the massacre of the Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics. "We should announce that we will pursue all those who stand behind these criminal acts to the bitter end and bring them to justice," Sne said.

His proposal was enthusiastically seconded by Ministers Hayim Ramon, Mikha Harish, and Amnon Rubinstein. "The other side," Sne said, "made a decision to send people to kill children dressed in Purim costumes. They have a sophisticated apparatus which dispatches people to carry out these attacks. These are the people we should hit. We have to decide not to sit back quietly until we capture them, precisely as we decided with regard to Munich." [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 5 March carries a pool report on pages A1 and A2 adding that "several ministers proposed the adoption of very firm measures, such as a military operation in the Gaza Strip and the demolition of whole streets in the suicide bombers' villages. Peres rejected the proposals, telling the ministers that a broad retaliatory action would not aid the war against the suicide bombers, which requires an action against pinpointed targets.

["Three Meretz ministers — Shulamit Aloni, Yosi Sarid, and Ya'ir Tzaban — abstained in the vote on the establishment of the new headquarters because they opposed some of the measures the prime minister proposed."]

In the course of the cabinet meeting and afterward, many ministers criticized the chief of staff's presentation and the army's position on operational options. Lieutenant General Shahaq told the ministers: "We act wherever we know of Hamas activity. The problem is that in many cases, we do not know." The ministers responded with astonishment: "What about intelligence? Where has our intelligence gone?"

A senior minister said after the meeting: "This is a disgrace. The army came without any plan or solution." Quite a few ministers assembled following the meeting and spoke negatively about the IDF's helplessness in the face of Hamas.

"There is a sense of helplessness," one of the ministers told MA'ARIV. "We are a military and economic power, and yet we cannot do anything against a number of suicide madmen. I do not think we should put up with this." The general opinion prevailing among the ministers was that the government has no real operational option at this time. "As long as there is no accurate intelligence, there is nothing that can be done," one of the ministers said. "I hope that the security branches will soon provide intelligence which will make an operation possible." [passage omitted]

[A report by Barukh Me'iri on page 2 of Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 5 March adds: "Following his meeting with President 'Ezer Weizman, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres announced after midnight last night that Israel will not proceed with other moves, including the evacuation of Hebron, if the PLO does not cancel the Palestinian Charter. 'I am not asking 'Arafat but demanding of him to amend the charter,' Peres said."]

Israel: Labor Sees No Chance of National Unity Government

TA0403092296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The assessment voiced in a ministerial consultation summoned by the prime minister last night is that at the moment there is no chance of forming a national unity government. Nevertheless, Prime Minister Peres has not yet responded to Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan's proposal on the issue.

Cabinet ministers told our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel that it would be easier for Labor if the elections were put off until their original date at the end of October, but noted that this was impractical because the opposition is opposed to it.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0700 GMT on 4 March adds that "Minister Efrayim Sne said that the government does not need partners or advisers to wage war on terror in the time left until the elections. Interviewed by Qol Yisra'el, the minister noted that even on such a terrible day, one should not blur the

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fact that there is an abysmal gap between the positions of Labor and Likud with regard to the future of Eretz Yisra'el."]

Israel: Peres Does Not 'Rule Out' National Unity Government

TA0403122096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres would not rule out the establishment of a national unity government were Binyamin Netanyahu to propose one. He said as much to Knesset Member Avraham Ravitz of Degel Hatora in a meeting this morning. The prime minister also discussed this issue yesterday in his meeting with Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan and promised to respond by tomorrow to Eytan's proposal to set up a unity government that will focus on a single issue: the fight against terror.

Israel: Peres Said To Consider Emergency Cabinet With Likud

TA0503105196 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 5 Mar 96 pp A1, A2

[Report by Yerah Tal and Nadav Shragay]

[FBIS Translated Text] Should the opposition agree to postpone the elections until their original date in October 1996, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will be willing to consider the establishment of an emergency security cabinet, which would include representatives of the opposition as ministers without portfolio and be modeled on the unity government set up on the eve of the Six-Day War.

This was disclosed last night by senior Labor members close to the prime minister, who added that even before the bombing in Tel Aviv yesterday, Peres spoke in favor of including seven Likud members and possibly other opposition factions in the government as ministers without portfolio. This would emulate the inclusion of Menahem Begin and Yosef Sapir of GAHAL [Gush Herut-Liberalim, a Likud precursor] in the unity government headed by Levi Eshkol in 1967.

The senior sources added that Peres is not prepared to negotiate the distribution of portfolios with the opposition because he fears that this might impair the implementation of the emergency tasks facing the government. Therefore, from Peres' point of view, the simplest choice would be to add ministers without portfolio to the government and include them in the decisionmaking concerning the war on terror.

Peres told his associates: "If they (the Likud) agree to join on this basis, I will agree to it on the spot."

The Labor sources noted that Peres has not come out publicly with his initiative because he realizes that Knesset Member [MK] Binyamin Netanyahu is not interested. According to them, Netanyahu must show willingness in order for the move to materialize.

Nevertheless, based on the talks Peres held yesterday with opposition members, the sources said their impression was that MK Ari'el Sharon is in favor of the Likud's joining a national emergency government or a national emergency cabinet. Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan has already announced his support for such a government.

Two days ago, Peres rejected the calls to appoint a right-wing security figure as defense minister. In an interview with HA'ARETZ yesterday, before the Tel Aviv bombing, he said he intended to retain the defense portfolio.

The prime minister told his associates that he sees a national unity government contributing mainly to public morale rather than making a real contribution to the war on terror. Nevertheless, he stressed, he does not minimize the potential contribution of such a government to the people's unity.

Peres further told his associates that he had carefully checked the opposition's proposals, including Netanyahu's five-point plan, but found no new ideas that have not been discussed before.

Labor members are looking into the possibility of putting off the primaries set for 25 March in view of the wave of terror. Many candidates called on Labor Secretary General Nisim Zvili to put off the primaries and try to postpone the general elections.

Likud sources are inclined to reject both proposals — a national emergency government and the postponement of the elections — and are calling on the government to focus on the war on terror with their full backing. Last night, the Likud would not react officially to the suggestion Peres raised with his associates.

Netanyahu refused to comment on either proposal yesterday, saying that he "is not prepared to discuss politics on such a day." He "promised the Likud's support for the government, if it fights terror seriously." Netanyahu added that "the concept behind the Oslo accords has failed" and called on the public to evince restraint "and contain its understandable rage."

Senior Likud members pointed out that the government had decided to bring the elections forward because of its good showing in the polls in the wake of Rabin's assassination, while now it proposes to postpone them because of its bad showing in the polls due to the

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wave of terror. "The people must choose between two different roads, and the way to do it is by elections. The government will get our full backing in the war on terror, but this unity need not be expressed politically," they said.

They added that joining the government as ministers without portfolio is actually tantamount to asking them to accept responsibility without having any power. Nevertheless, the possibility was not ruled out, and some Likud members estimated that the initiative will gather momentum in the coming days in light of Sharon's and Eytan's support for a national emergency cabinet. Sharon called for the establishment of a national emergency cabinet for a year, even if this entails putting off the elections.

MK Tzahi Hanegbi sharply reacted to the prime minister's announcement on the establishment of a special headquarters to coordinate the war on terror. "Undoubtedly, this is one of the most shameful decisions a wartime government could have made," he said.

Israel: Majority Favors Total Separation, National Government

TA0403100396 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 4 Mar 96 p 15

[Public opinion poll conducted by the Dahaf Institute directed by Dr. Mina Tzemah; all figures quoted in percentages]

[FBIS Translated Text] Question: Should a national emergency government be set up now?

Answer: Yes (57); no (41); did not reply (2).

Question: Should there be a total and indefinite separation between Israel and the Palestinians?

Answer: Yes (85); no (13); did not reply (2).

Question: Should the premiership and Knesset elections be put off until their original date, at the end of October?

Answer: Yes (30); no (66); did not reply (4).

The poll was conducted last night among 502 respondents who constitute a representative sample of Israel's adult population. The maximum margin of error is 4 percent.

Israel: IDF Seals Homes, Raids Islamic College, Arrests 'Dozens'

TA0403123996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] raided the al-Fawwar refugee camp near Hebron this morning and sealed the homes of the two suicide bombers who perpetrated the attacks in Jerusalem and Ashqelon last week in anticipation of their demolition. [passage omitted]

At dawn today IDF soldiers raided the Islamic College in Abu-Dis, east of Jerusalem, conducted searches, and impounded inflammatory Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] material. Palestinian sources told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that 14 students were arrested and that one of them was lightly injured in the course of the operation.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1100 GMT on 4 March adds that "overnight the Israeli security forces arrested dozens of Palestinians wanted for questioning by the Shin Bet in the city of Hebron, the Ramallah area, and other places in Judaea and Samaria."]

Israel: Full Closure in Force; Homes Sealed in West Bank

TA0503054996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Report by Steve Linde]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Security forces have been beefed up throughout the country today. In Jerusalem, 500 additional soldiers are reinforcing the 1,000 troops deployed yesterday. In Tel Aviv, there are 400 extra police and soldiers, and more police and Civil Guard volunteers have been placed in Haifa and other towns. Police will carry out intensive checks and searches at all places where large groups of people gather. The public is asked to be alert and patient, bearing in mind that Purim also begins today. Security officials say that despite the anger and frustration, acts of vengeance serve no purpose.

A full closure is effect on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and Arab residents have been barred from leaving towns and villages in the territories. There is a ban on employing Palestinian workers in Israel and in Jewish settlements in the territories. Both Palestinians and Israelis caught defying these orders will be severely punished.

The public security minister has ordered the police commissioner to take action against all known Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] institutions in East Jerusalem. Hamas activists will be placed under administrative detention and families of suicide bombers will also be punished.

From early this morning, security forces have already sealed the homes of eight terrorists in Judaea and Samaria.

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[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 5 March adds: "This morning, the security forces sealed the home of Yahya 'Ayyash, The Engineer, in the village of Rafat in Samaria. In the village of Burqa', they sealed the home of the terrorist who perpetrated the terrorist attack on the No. 18 bus on 3 March, and in the al-Fawwar refugee camp, they sealed the homes the suicide bombers who perpetrated last week's attacks in Jerusalem and Ashqelon."]

Israel: Weizman Calls For 'All-Out Offensive'

TA0503113296 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1000 GMT 5 Mar 96

[News conference by Israeli President 'Ezer Weizman at Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv after visiting victims of the 4 March attack at Dizengoff Center — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Weizman] My wife, Re'uma, and I visited a number of injured people here — some more and some less seriously injured, and some in the recovery room — but we especially met with their families. We continue to do so with the hope and thought that this is helpful. Let me tell you one thing: We, too, are strengthened by the visit, although the crowd is tense, and I understand this. It has been a long time since I witnessed such a thing. Let me repeat: It is possible to understand this, because we are used to seeing our soldiers hurt on the battlefield but not to seeing our civilians — particularly women and children — hurt in this manner.

Still, before you ask questions, I must say one thing: We, the citizens of the State of Israel, must recover and know that this is our land. I do not like to use cliches, but I hope it is clear that we have no other. They are not engaged in a war against peace; this is a war over the existence of the State of Israel, as I already said two weeks ago, and this is the first time that they are trying to break the nation's morale. Therefore, I am appealing to the public, to the citizens of the state: Although I understand that there is pressure, disappointment, anger, and harsh criticism, we should all know that this is our land, that we have no other, and that we shall overcome, with the hope that all those elements that handle Israel's se :rity — the army, the police, the Shin Bet, and others — will launch a counteroffensive. If this is war, in war we attack. A defensive war usually does not succeed; it is a transitional stage that leads to an offensive. We must launch an all-out offensive in this matter.

I hope that the deliberations that were held will bear fruit. I believe in forces, operations, and plans, and we should soon see impressive activity to uproot this evil.

[Qol Yisra'el's Shlomo Raz] Mr. President, your friend, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, came to you yesterday following the cabinet meeting. He must have briefed you on the measures the cabinet decided on yesterday. Do these measures correspond with what you just said? Do they seem right to you?

[Weizman] Look, we did not discuss the details of an operational plan. He certainly told me a number of things. Some of them satisfy me, while others.... [pauses] As I said before, we must launch an offensive. Let me repeat: One of the basic rules of war is perseverance and — to avoid the use of the word aggressiveness — implementation. I am certain that all the elements concerned are scrutinizing operational plans — both big and small — today. The prime minister did not come to answer my questions. He came so we could exchange views. I was happy about some things and not yet happy about others.

[IDF Radio's Golan Yokhpaz] What about a political union? Is the time ripe for this? You talked about a political union; are we all united now?

[Weizman] I never said a political union. Prove this to me. What I said after the second or, perhaps, the first attack — it is difficult to remember anymore — is that we should assemble the best minds — be they from the right or the left — who have dealt with such a war and consult them. I did not say a thing about a political union; I do not get involved in politics. Therefore, this is my answer to you.

[Qol Yisra'el's Goni Mardor] Do you think it is time for a national unity government?

[Weizman] This is not for me to answer. I think the government should provide an operational answer to terrorist acts.

[Raz] President Weizman, do you think that the army should enter those areas from which we withdrew in order to carry out military operations?

[Weizman] First, we did not withdraw from them but rather left them. The term withdrawal applies to a defeat on the battlefield. We left those areas in order to secure a better situation. If the security elements think we should enter such an area, we will.

[Raz] Even if this violates the Oslo accords?

[Weizman] The Oslo accords allow for our entering several locations. I would like to tell you something that I have already said: The duty of a government, the duty of an army, is to defend its citizens by using every means. If these bodies decide to use one measure or another, bless them.

[Channel 2 Television's 'Imanu'el Rosen] The prime minister was asked yesterday whether the law may be

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violated in the framework of these measures? He said that the only law is the law of security. Do you agree with this?

[Weizman] This corresponds to what I have said — namely, that the duty of Israel's security elements is to defend and provide security to the people of Israel.

[Mardor] Mr. Weizman, what comfort can you offer the Israeli people at this time?

[Weizman] Its strength. We can take comfort in looking back at what we have achieved here over almost 50 years, surely over the last 20 or 25 years. Today we are a larger country with a better economy and immigration. The country is currently suffering from a very bad disease which hurts and endangers it and is causing our citizens unprecedented pain. I am calling for a lot of patience, courage, and morale.

[Unidentified correspondent, in English] Did this bomb also explode the peace process?

[Weizman, in English] Look, I don't care about phrases. This bomb did not explode the State of Israel, and the State of Israel eventually will make peace with all the Arab world. It could be late a little bit, but it will never destroy the enemy.

Israel: Shahal on Security Measures, Possible Unity Government

TA0503070396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Israeli Public Security Minister Moshe Shahal by Me'ir Einstein; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Einstein] This morning, we have already heard criticism of the decisions the government made last night. The claim is that they are insufficient to fight Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terrorism and suicide bombers.

[Shahal] No single decision will suffice until the monstrous phenomenon of turning human beings into exploding bombs is wiped out. We are witnessing a similar phenomenon on the part of Hizballah, Hamas' sister organization, which we have been fighting in the security zone. We learned today that four soldiers were killed. Therefore, I believe that there is no panacea. Anyone who says that terrorism can be uprooted overnight is wrong. A special command was set up yesterday, and it was given unlimited powers to act everywhere and at any time, as it deems necessary.

[Einstein] Does everywhere mean that it can operate in areas that are currently under the control of the Palestinian Authority if it deems this necessary?

[Shahal] There is no restriction on the command. If it reaches the conclusion that such action is needed, it will carry it out everywhere. That is why I stressed: everywhere and at any time, as the command deems necessary.

I reiterate that we must separate from the Palestinians, which is the best solution. There can be no 100 percent separation, but there can be a reduction in friction with them. When they are ready and able to run their own affairs and operate against those among them who want to kill us, then we will open the door. The instrument of separation is vital, and I believe that adopting that policy is a much more stable and comprehensive solution. It will take time, because the government made the decision to launch the separation process on 3 March. We must stop terrorists from reaching Dizengoff Street, because our aim is not to capture them in Tel Aviv but to try to shoot them down inside a security zone far from the Israeli populace.

[Einstein] I want to move to the political arena. This morning, Likud Knesset Member [MK] Ari'el Sharon reiterated his call to set up a national emergency government:

[Begin Sharon recording] We must immediately set up a national emergency government for a restricted period, perhaps a year, with a single aim: to fight terrorism. The base of such a government must be as wide as possible and must include the best minds capable of handling such a struggle. This is the main mission at the moment. In protecting the lives of Israeli civilians, we cannot depend on anyone other than ourselves, and we must finally act. Now is not the time to deal with primaries and elections. We are at war. We must gather all the best minds together and strike at and annihilate the terror. I want to reiterate: It can be done — not by talk but only by action. Only then will we be able to achieve peace. [end recording]

[Einstein] Mr. Shahal, is this proposal acceptable to you?

[Shahal] I agree with many elements of it. I do not rule out a government that unites all the forces that agree to work together. I was a member of two unity governments. I initiated the first. I have accepted Sharon's proposal with regard to the primaries and ceased my involvement in them some time ago. I think that at this hour, when we are all tense and feeling pain, it is not time for politics and parties but for full unity of the people to fight these animals.

[Einstein] MK David Levi said this morning that Prime Minister Shim'on Peres must initiate a move to set up such a government.

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[Shahal] I am not the prime minister. I told you my view. I do not rule out the possibility, but I leave it to those who have to decide. I am dealing with only one thing: reinforcing the Israel Police to give it the ability to provide security for the people of Israel. That is the only thing with which I am dealing. I call on the people of Israel to help the police, who are performing a very difficult task.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 5 March reports that Meretz Minister Amnon Rubinstein "rejects the idea of a national unity government."]

Israel: Shahal on Increased Security Presence in Jerusalem

TA0403144796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Public Security Minister Moshe Shahal says that the increased presence of soldiers and policemen in Jerusalem will continue until the bus protection unit is established and the police presence in the city is beefed up within the framework of the separation plan. Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that Minister Shahal proposes to extend the military service of Border Police personnel and to postpone the retirement of policemen who are about to retire.

Israel: General on Activity Beyond Area B; Transfer of Goods Halted

TA0503073296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] operated in several villages in Judaea and Samaria this morning and sealed eight homes of terrorists who perpetrated suicide bombings. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the IDF sealed the homes in Area B, which is under joint Israeli-Palestinian control.

Major General Ilan Biran, commander of the Central Command, said that the sealed homes will be demolished later. Gen. Biran noted that the IDF operates in the field according to its requirements and has never restricted its activity to Area B. He said that in the past two months, the security forces have arrested over 150 Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad activists in Judaea and Samaria. [passage omitted]

From this morning, the transfer of goods from the Gaza Strip and the operation of the Israeli plants at the Erez junction was stopped. Severe restrictions were also imposed on the exit of Palestinian Authority officials from the Gaza Strip to Israel.

Israel: PA Officials Reportedly Transporting Arms, Fugitives

TA0503080896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Report by Yoni Ben-Menahem]

[FBIS Translated Text] The defense establishment is concerned about information it has been receiving for several weeks about Palestinian Authority [PA] senior officials' abusing the VIP permits they received from Israel.

Israel granted three types of VIP cards — A, B, and C — to a total of 350 Palestinians. The permits are signed by Major General Oren Shahor, coordinator of activities in the territories, and Jamil al-Tarifi, a PA member. The Class A VIP permit gives senior PA officials special rights: They may travel with armed escorts, and they receive special treatment at the border crossings. Some 50 such permits have been issued so far. According to intelligence information, some of the Palestinians have abused the permits to move arms, wanted men, and people denied entry into Israel from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank.

Several weeks ago, Brigadier Gen. Herzl Getz, head of Israel's defense committee, banned Gen. Nasir Yusuf, commander of Palestinian police in Gaza, from entering Israel for a week after it transpired that Yusuf had transferred people in violation of the terms of his permit.

In the wake of the information, an order was issued to carry out strict checks of VIP vehicles at IDF [Israel Defense Forces] roadblocks. This led to confrontations between IDF soldiers and Palestinian VIP's, some of whom protested to Israel.

The Palestinians are insisting that they should be the ones who issue permits for their escorts to carry weapons, while Israel insists that only it can issue them. The security sources said that if the intelligence information is verified, tough measures will be taken against the Palestinian VIP's who abused their permits.

Israel: Spokesman Dromi: Command To Pursue Terrorists 'Anywhere'

LD0503110196 London BBC Television Network in English 2230 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Interview with Israeli Government Spokesman Uri Dromi in Jerusalem by correspondent Jeremy Paxman in London; from the "Newsnight" program — live]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Paxman] Mr. Dromi, there was a cabinet meeting tonight, at which it was decided to set up a special command to go after these terrorists. Will they be able to pursue them anywhere?

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[Dromi] Definitely. They will be able to pursue them anywhere, they will be able to take any measures necessary to put an end to this kind of terrorism.

[Paxman] Would that include pursuing them into areas under Palestinian authority?

[Dromi] I do not want to elaborate on the measures they are going to take, but obviously we would like to see the Palestinian Authority itself doing this job, fulfilling its obligations according to the Oslo agreement. If this happens, fine; if not, we have the right and the duty to protect our citizens.

[Paxman] How much of a risk do you think that that hot pursuit, or otherwise, would pose to the peace settlement?

[Dromi] I think the greatest risk for the peace process is the terrorist attacks on our cities. If this stops, then the peace process can go on like before. But right now we have a big threat at hand and we have to put all our brains and forces together. Hopefully, the Palestinian Authority will join forces with us, the international community. This is war, all-out-war against terrorism, and we are going to win it.

[Paxman] But clearly Mr. 'Arafat's own security operation has failed so far, hasn't it?

[Dromi] I do not want to pass judgment on them. One thing for sure, those atrocities continue and they enjoy immunity there, they enjoy infrastructure. Preachers in mosques are brainwashing kids, promising them heaven if they blow up themselves in the midst of Israeli cities, people are associated with terror. All this has to stop.

Israel: 'Rumors' Give New Identity for Jerusalem Suicide Terrorist

TA0403133196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to new rumors that have spread in the territories, the suicide terrorist who carried out the attack in Jerusalem yesterday is Ra'id 'Abd-al-Karim Sharnubi, 24, from the village of Burqa in Samaria.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that so far there is no confirmation of this report, and the security establishment is checking the information.

Israel: Shin Bet Chief—'Hundreds' Waiting To Carry Out Suicide Attacks

TA0403133896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Shin Bet chief 'Ami Ayalon says that hundreds of youths in the Gaza Strip and Judaea and Samaria are waiting their turn to commit suicide terror attacks on behalf of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].

According to Ayalon, in the al-Fawwar refugee camp — from which the two suicide terrorists who carried out the attacks in Jerusalem and Ashqelon last week came — 30-40 youths aged 15-20 were located and detained after declaring their desire to carry out suicide missions. Some 6,000 people reside in this camp. 'Ami Ayalon added that such numbers were not been encountered by the Shin Bet in the past. The suicide terrorists are being indoctrinated in Islamic studies programs being offered in mosques or the teachers seminary, such as the one in Ramallah in which students from Gaza and Judaea and Samaria study. The person who recruited the Jerusalem and Ashqelon terrorists also studied at this seminary.

Israel: Spokesman Urges 'Arafat To Take Control of Palestinians

LD0403203896 Paris TF-1 Television Network in French 1900 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent Jean-Claude Narcy] Daniel Shek, the spokesman of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, is with us live from Jerusalem. Good evening, Mr. Shek.

[Shek, in French] Good evening.

[Narcy] I want to ask you this evening what the limits of the patience of the Israeli people are with one bomb attack a day.

[Shek] There is no more patience. A cabinet meeting is taking place right now. I cannot yet tell you what the decisions will be, but one thing is certain: Right now, the top priority — the only one, perhaps — is the personal safety of Israeli citizens. This situation cannot continue.

[Narcy] How can suicide bombers be countered?

[Shek] I do not know. The cabinet meeting is probably going to make decisions, very harsh decisions, perhaps. In such a situation, everyone must take their responsibilities. The time has come for Yasir 'Arafat to prove that he is determined to continue the peace process, to fight — in every way, not only with demonstrations and speeches — the whole infrastructure of those organizations that have a Satanic ideology, which send young men to be blown to pieces in order to kill as many Israelis, as many Jews as possible, whether they be children, women or elderly people, anyone.

[Narcy] Daniel Shek, these bomb attacks are taking place against an electoral background. One of Yasir 'Arafat's advisers said today that he was convinced

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these actions were carried out with the cooperation of Israeli extremists. What is your reaction?

[Shek] I have read the statement made by (Nabin Shahad) in this afternoon's issue of the newspaper LE MONDE. I must say that I am disgusted, because such bizarre attempts to put the blame on other people....[pauses] According to this article, everyone is to be blamed: Iran, Jordan, Syria, and Israel. I think that this is a totally wrong approach. Instead of raving with this kind of conspiracy theory, it is necessary to take harsh, real measures against what is probably a minority in the Palestinian people. The time has come to prove that Yasir 'Arafat, the leader elected by a large majority within the Palestinian people, can take control over his people.

[Narcy] If things go on, should these bomb attacks continue — which is what Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has just announced — can the peace process be jeopardized? This is indeed the aim of the extremists.

[Shek] Undoubtedly. All I can say is that, for Israel, the peace process is an important interest, a vital one perhaps. So far we have kept all the promises we made in the Oslo agreements. We would like to continue to do so scrupulously, but we will only do so if, on the other side, on the Palestinian side, they take their responsibilities and keep their promises, too. The first promise to be kept these days, in these difficult times, is to fight in every way those deadly terrorist units.

[Narcy] Thank you, Daniel Shek.

Israel: Netanyahu on Necessary Measures Against Terrorism

TA0403195996 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1842 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Statement by Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu at the Laromme Hotel in Jerusalem "a short time ago" — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] I know that there is great rage; I feel it myself. The main thing at the moment, however, is self-control; not to permit this rage to get the better of us; to avoid rioting and remain coolheaded. They think they can break us and crumble us. They will not break us. We will break them. But in order to break them we must first honestly and courageously say that we cannot proceed in this manner. We must not get used to daily massacres in our streets. We must honestly and courageously say that this policy has failed; that this concept has collapsed; that the idea that we can rely on 'Arafat to do our work for us, that he will be our subcontractor for fighting terrorism, is unfeasible. He is not fighting the terrorists, he does not want to fight them — he cannot and does not want to fight them. The entire concept of relying on 'Arafat to fight for us should be laid to rest. This is not the way.

There is a way to fight terrorism, but the problem is first of all to change the policy — and the time has come to make such a change. I think the most important thing is first of all to make it clear that we are taking the initiative into our hands. The most important thing is to strike at them everywhere — in their homes, villages, and bases — to strike at them without mercy. And not only at them, but also at their collaborators, the families that harbor them and give them cover, to deport those who help them and to deal with the entire infrastructure that exists there. We have all the means to do this, but this requires us to remove all the restrictions. If we carry out this change — if we change our policy as required, I believe there is no reason for us to think that this situation will continue. We can bring about a profound change.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1845 GMT on 4 March includes a live report by Hadar Vismonsky adding: "Netanyahu emphasized that he has not received any call from Shim'on Peres and that he has no intention of addressing him on the issue of a national unity government or the possibility of delaying the elections. He said he has no intention of dealing with politics this evening, only with the war against terrorism — as he hopes the government will also do."]

[Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew at 1910 GMT on 4 March carries a live interview with Netanyahu by Dan Shilon. Asked by Shilon what he would tell President Clinton today about continuing the peace process if he were prime minister, Netanyahu answers: "I would say to you and the entire Israeli public that we will continue with the peace process, but we will insist on it being real peace; we will insist that the other side understand we will accept and agree to nothing less than that. We will not accept fine talk devoid of content; we will not accept talk about the eradication of terrorism by them when they are permitting Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] to organize these murderous attacks. We will insist that the necessary conditions for real peace be implemented. This peace will also include the things that are dearest to us: the security of our children; the integrity of our capital; and defending the basic things that make peace meaningful. What value does peace have if any of us can be blown to pieces in the street."]

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Israel: Likud Leader Backs Government's Efforts To Combat Terrorism

LD0503120996 London BBC Television Network in English 2230 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Interview with Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of the Israeli Likud Opposition Party, in Israel by correspondent Jeremy Paxman in London on 4 March; from the "Newsnight" program — recorded]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Paxman] What is your reaction to the latest outrage?

[Netanyahu] Well, it is an outrage. It is a horror. We have had five savage terror attacks in one week, and we have had over 60 people killed in the cities of Israel, in Jerusalem, and in Tel Aviv today, including children that were blown up today. People recognize that this cannot continue. We want peace, and peace first of all, means not being blown up to pieces. I think the government has made a decision today to vigorously combat this terrorism, and they will enjoy my support, they will enjoy the support of the entire people.

[Paxman] Does the initiative being taken to try to rout out these bombers have your full confidence?

[Netanyahu] Well, I have said to Mr. Peres, last week in the Knesset after the first attack, and today, again, and including in a private meeting that I had with him, that he will have my full backing. I am sure that the government must realize now, and at least on the basis of the statements that they have made tonight, they do realize, that you cannot separate peace from security. We all want to progress toward peace, but if security collapses, there will be neither security nor peace. What they are talking about now is to afford our security forces the freedom of action to go after these killers, and especially those who dispatch them, at any place, at any time, as they deem fit. That is something I think is important for security and important for peace.

[Paxman] Has it been a mistake, in your judgment, to allow Mr. 'Arafat to have security responsibility in areas where the Palestinian Authority is in charge?

[Netanyahu] Absolutely. I think this was a big mistake. You have to understand that I, from my point of view, and I think from most Israelis' point of view, we would like the Palestinians to conduct their own affairs. We are not interested in governing them. But when it comes to our security, handing over the responsibility of policing against terror and protecting Israeli lives to Yasir 'Arafat, that was a big mistake. He is either unable or unwilling to discharge that responsibility, and the result is what you see. There is this plague of terrorist attacks, bombing attacks that we have experienced in recent times. So that has to change, and I think there is now virtually a universal agreement in Israel that we must change it.

[Paxman] That would mean redeploying Israeli security forces in those areas?

[Netanyahu] Not necessarily redeploying on a permanent basis, but there are a lot of things that we can do, that we are doing, in the field of preemptive intelligence, in the field of hot pursuit, in the field of covert operations, all sorts of things that we can do, and I do not want to get into precisely how we do it. But the principle that we have to understand is this: if I were to create right near London a terrorist safe haven, if I said to the IRA that there is a place right next to London that the British police and security forces and the SAS [Special Air Service] — none of your forces can go there. It will become immediately a terror base, a terror capital. That is essentially what has happened in the Gaza and the outlying areas in the West Bank, where we have created effectively immune terror sanctuaries. That is the mistake that has to be corrected. That is the policy that has to be changed.

[Paxman] But in that case, would not the whole peace settlement be really seriously undermined, perhaps to the point where it was no longer sustainable?

[Netanyahu] Not really. I think that, again, the idea that we can have these immune sanctuaries, these terrorist havens that are operated from, and nothing is done from the other side, and call it peace, that is not peace. Peace is when we have — peace is when we have peace. Peace is when people do not get blown up to smithereens, and somebody has to be responsible for doing that. If 'Arafat will not do it, and apparently he is not doing it, then we will have to do it. But I think we can achieve that return to security. And if we do, then I think it will be good for the Palestinians, it will be good for Israel, and it will be good for peace. It is the only way to proceed. We simply cannot make this artificial separation between fighting terrorism and peace and pretend that we can have peace and not fight terrorism; it does not work.

Israel: Antigovernment Rallies Held in Tel Aviv, Elsewhere 4 Mar

TA0503113896 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 5 Mar 96 p A7

[Report by Yosi Hatuni and Sami Sokol]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Over 1,000 people congregated outside the Defense Ministry on Tel Aviv's Kaplan Street last night in a stormy and violent protest. Police detained dozens of demonstrators for questioning, some of whom were beaten up while in custody. The demonstrators dispersed along Kaplan Street, from

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Bet Sokolov to Victor's Gate. They shouted "Reprisal, war" and threw bottles, stones, eggs, and fruit at the police. Some people sustained light wounds.

When an official car passed by, the demonstrators shouted catcalls. They carried placards saying: "Those who aid Ishmael are not part of Israel"; "This peace is killing us"; "This is not peace; this is terrorism"; "Peres promised and gave us a new Middle East"; "Peres, you are being protected, but who protects us?"; "Put the Oslo gang on trial"; "A government with Meretz leaves us without a state"; "The government of '96, the final solution"; and "We have a new Middle East," as well as placards that compared Peres to Neville Chamberlain.

The demonstrators also shouted diatribes at Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and Le'a Rabin and praised Barukh Goldstein, the Israeli settler who carried out the Cave of the Patriarchs massacre, and Yig'al 'Amir, charged with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination.

In addition to the dozens of policemen deployed on both sides of the road who formed a human chain against the demonstrators, dozens of additional policemen and police cadets were sent in as reinforcements. The protesters shouted abuse at the police and "the police state." Every few minutes, members of the special forces rushed at especially violent protesters and held them for questioning. Detainees went wild, and the police had to use force to control them. [passage omitted]

Some 100 people demonstrated outside the prime minister's Tel Aviv home. Another demonstration was held at the site of the attack on the corner of Dizengoff and King George Streets where some 200 people gathered. They called on the prime minister to resign immediately and shouted: "With blood and fire, we will banish Peres"; "Death to the Arabs"; "Peres, resign"; and "Peres, wake up." Some of the demonstrators carried placards saying "Our blood is not cheap." Demonstrators lit candles, waved black flags, and held up torches.

At the same time, several dozen youths gathered on Dizengoff Street and tried to break through roadblocks, but were held back by the police. The demonstrators shouted support for Me'ir Kahana and Rehav'am Ze'evi and then dispersed.

In Jerusalem, some 150 demonstrators blocked the Pat junction near the Katamon neighborhood. They cursed the police and the Arabs, and several tires were set on fire. Police units, which rushed to the scene, pushed the demonstrators onto the adjacent pavement, but did not arrest anybody. Firefighters extinguished the burning tires, and the junction was reopened to traffic.

Some 100 tires were set on fire by dozens of demonstrators in downtown Holon protesting against the wave of terrorist attacks. Two youths were detained on Tel Aviv's Lod Highway after trying to ignite two tires. Several garbage bins were set on fire on Ramat Gan's Shalem Street by dozens of demonstrators, which blocked the road for some time.

Israel: Factors Behind Tel Aviv Bombing, Implications Viewed

MM0503120496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 5 Mar 96 p 17

[Article by 'Abd-al-Wahhab Badrakhan: "Questions After Tel Aviv Operation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Another operation and 20 victims.... this time in Tel Aviv. It proves that this stage is one of reprisals which one should expect at the end of a conflict and the beginning of a conflict of another kind. The question is: Are these operations due to negligence on the security services' part? Of course, no. No services can prevent any suicide action. But the question that the Israelis never ask is: Is the peace process being run in a manner that eliminates any justification for such suicide operations? Certainly not. On the contrary, all that is conducted in the framework of "the peace agreements," Israel's practices and schemes, and its views as regards the final status of what it terms "territories" — all this is causing the bloodshed policy to continue.

It was important after the Sunday [3 March] operation in Jerusalem to explore reactions on the Israeli scene. The blame is being laid on the peace itself. It is being expressed in the form of insults and threats addressed to the Arabs. They have been transmitted by Western television services. This is addition to extreme anger from Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, calls for toppling his government, and threats to kill him so that he would join Yitzhaq Rabin. To any Arab viewer anywhere, the picture was unfamiliar, because the victims are normally Arabs and the Western televisions' tone is normally one of triumphalism rather than condemnation. Without doubt the Arab's feeling toward what he is watching has not yet lost its malicious joy. He has not been given the opportunity to do so, because of what is happening in front of him, namely the falsification of facts that is provoking their feelings. Thus, one is still in conflict with oneself, with or without Hamas and the Jihad operations... and with or without the regrets expressed by the U.S. President and Arab and non-Arab leaders, who continue to ignore the facts.

After the Tel Aviv operation — and Hamas' involvement has not been ascertained fully — there has been much speculation over the quarter organizing these operations and the aims it is really seeking to achieve. If one thinks that the killing is for the sake of killing

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and the sabotage is for the sake of sabotage, one should also look beyond these considerations. These operations are designed to achieve certain aims. Maybe Dr. Nabil Sha'th's statements are an indication that there are numerous sources and interlinked motives behind the political dimensions of these operations.

The Palestinian Authority cannot do more than what its resources allow it to do. Besides, it too is targeted more than anyone else. Some Palestinian sources believe that the quarters behind these operations are seeking as of now to influence the final status negotiations and to stop what the Palestinians have achieved so far at this point, since it is not only Israel that does not want the self-rule to develop into a state. Of course, this is attributable to the fact that the peace process has been and is being conducted mainly without an international authority, and because it is content with the U.S. sponsor, who is overseeing the process with his interests in mind and without any concern for the future of the peace itself.

Without doubt there are among the quarters planning these operations people who have already cast their vote for Likud and Binyamin Netanyahu. It is now clear that Peres' chances have declined rapidly over the past two days. Without indulging into the prospects for and the results of the elections, Peres has no alternative but to go for the option of a fierce war against Hamas in the hope of recovering the points his popularity has lost. That is, it is not ruled out that he could resort to all methods, especially large-scale military intervention in the self-rule areas to search for Islamic activists, with what this means in terms of humiliation and weakness for the Palestinian Authority. At any rate, every action has two sides: white and black.

Israel: Rabin's Killer Found 'Fit To Stand Trial'

TA0303171496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Psychiatrists who examined Yig'al 'Amir have decided that he is fit to stand trial. They said they found no evidence of any mental illness or emotional disturbance. The psychiatric examination took place after 'Amir went on trial for the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

Israel: Rabin's Assassin Testifies at Trial

TA0503120296 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 5 Mar 96 p 12

[Report by news agencies]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yig'al 'Amir, testifying from the witness stand for the first time yesterday, told Tel Aviv District Court that Halakah dictated he assassinate Yitzhaq Rabin.

'Amir said Rabin's peace policies endangered Israelis and had to be halted.

"It was clear from Halakah that din rodef applied to the prime minister," 'Amir said, referring to a command to kill anyone who intends to cause the death of Jews.

"I know Jewish law and din rodef means that if you've tried everything else and nothing works, then you have to kill him," 'Amir told the court. 'Amir also said that at least one rabbi had told him that Rabin deserved to die. Police have questioned several rabbis about whether they issued such a ruling, but none has been charged.

He said he had decided to target Rabin after Israel signed the 1993 Oslo accord with the PLO.

'Amir's lawyers put their client on the stand in what appeared to be a diminished capacity defense. They have said their client's obsession with removing Rabin from power diminished his ability to reason, when he shot and killed the prime minister at a peace rally.

They also said a psychiatric examination ordered by the court showed that 'Amir, who faces a life sentence if convicted of premeditated murder, has mental problems.

"I think it was clear from his testimony that when he decides to do something, he goes all the way and nothing prevents him from carrying it out. This type of person has a certain mental instability," said Shmu'el Fleishman, one of 'Amir's three lawyers, after the hearing.

The court said on Sunday [3 March] that state psychiatrists who examined 'Amir concluded he was fit to stand trial, but their report is being kept classified.

'Amir said that assassinating Rabin was a challenge similar to quitting smoking or overcoming a dislike of computers.

"One of the lessons of Judaism is to allow the intellect to overcome the emotions," he said in a calm, assured tone. "If the Torah tells you to do something against your emotions, then it should be done. For example, stopping smoking may be difficult, but it can be done."

Testifying earlier, police interrogator Arye Silberman said that when he first questioned 'Amir, the defendant would argue that his case was similar to that of battered wives who eventually lash out against their husbands.

"He felt that his deed was not so terrible, and that he would be convicted of manslaughter," Silberman said.

But 'Amir indicated he had always been in control.

"I want to emphasize that I was waiting for the right moment," he said. "A decision such as this, to take down a leader, can change the future of a nation."

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He said his greatest fear was failure. "If I failed I would end up in jail for 20 years and waste my life.... The years will tell whether I was right or wrong."

As 'Amir confessed over and over again to killing Rabin, occasionally interrupting Fleishman, Judge Edmond Levi caustically remarked: "This is a wonderful cross-examination."

The trial is to resume on Thursday.

Israel: U.S. Sanctions on Libya Said Failed To Attain Goals

TA0403131496 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 4 Mar 96 p C6

[Commentary by Tzvi Bar'el: "Libya Is Not Afraid of Sanctions"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Libya — like Iraq, Iran, Sudan, and Syria — is a Middle East country that has been under U.S. economic sanctions for the past four years. The sanctions, meant to punish those countries for their domestic or foreign policies, for their support of terror, or for a war they had waged, in fact, attempt to encourage a change.

In Libya, for example, the sanctions have two aims: To bring about a civilian uprising that would topple al-Qadhdhafi and to force al-Qadhdhafi to hand over the two terrorists who blew up the PanAm plane over Lockerbie so that they can be tried in British or U.S. courts.

So far, however, the sanctions have failed to attain their goals. The sanctions did make the life of the citizens of those countries miserable, but it seems that, as far as the Middle East goes, they have failed to create the serious crisis that would bring about a revolution. [passage omitted]

Al-Qadhdhafi is probably aware of the fact that international companies fear his whims. This is why he appointed civilians who graduated from the best universities worldwide as heads of local banks and financing institutions, attempting to create an impression that Libyan financial establishments are properly run.

Libyan assets around the world suffered a real blow when the United States decided to freeze them, but it seems that al-Qadhdhafi has managed to overcome this hurdle. Since this sanction was imposed, Libya has been funneling money out through other Arab countries.

Libya is currently investing in projects in Russia and China, and in an attempt to avoid the impact of a sudden decision on new sanctions, al-Qadhdhafi ordered Libyan deposits to be moved from one country to another so that they could not be seized.

In order to circumvent the sanctions, Libya uses Arab countries, including some that are in close contact with Egypt, Tunisia, and Gulf emirates. When business and profits are concerned, an Arab country in this region cannot be isolated and completely cut off from its supportive environment. It appears, therefore, that those who should worry about the sanctions are not the countries that have been punished, but rather businesses in the countries that imposed the sanctions.

Israel: Commentary Supports Postponing Elections

TA0403154696 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 4 Mar 96 p 17

[Commentary by Ron Miberg: "Security Now, Elections Later"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is an unparalleled complex and explosive situation. Those who decided to bring the elections forward on a conjectural political whim (whose motives and advantages were clear) are also those who would benefit from — and perhaps even exploit politically — a decision to postpone them until their original or a later date. Having said that, and despite the verbal exchanges that such a proposal might trigger, postponing the elections could give the two major parties an opportunity to prove their honesty. The same Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] that vowed to ensure the late Yitzhaq Rabin's defeat in the 1996 elections has shifted its plans to Shim'on Peres. Its logic is clear, and its resolve has been proven. Israel's abandoning the peace process and the ensuing deterioration into well-known enmity is the terrorists' breeding ground of choice. Postponing the elections would temporarily remove the bull's-eye from our backs. At the end of the second week of the war that started in February, there would be nothing wrong with that.

On the face of it, postponing the elections would seem to be designed primarily to save Peres' government and his waning chances of winning them. It will be difficult to cope with the cynical and malicious barbs about this. Those who are seriously prepared to examine such a possibility will have to take into account the intensity of the fallout and its attendant demagoguery. It would not be the first time that political rivals in Israel have been called upon to sit together temporarily in an emergency government. It does not come as a surprise that the Likud is now presenting a choice security team with an aggressive orientation whose accomplishments — even if we dispute their political logic — are recorded in the annals of Israel's military history. Even if they are not our cup of tea, Ari'el Sharon and Refa'el Eytan undoubtedly are outstanding

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representatives of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] tradition of aggressiveness and retaliation. I would not reject their contribution out of hand.

Even those who believe that Hamas finished saying its bit for this election period yesterday must take into account that it does not take more than 10 suicide operators who disagree with their leaders for the attacks to continue. Assuming that it will be hard to attain a formal cease-fire with Hamas (based on the knowledge that the security forces will soon revert to a policy of reprisal and elimination), the circle of blood will probably not be broken. The elimination of one "Engineer" or another will force Hamas to retaliate ad infinitum.

The way things are going, one need not be an illustrious political commentator to guess that Binyamin Netanyahu's chances of replacing Peres became realistic this week. In order to put off the elections, the government must tell Netanyahu that his positions are valid and that his ideas and misgivings merit examination. It will be hard to formulate a defensive and aggressive security policy in the shadow of an election campaign. Every spectacular operation will be perceived as an election ruse; every assassination and raid will be seen as a step to improve morale. Just as the Likud claimed that Labor should not be allowed to win the elections by making cynical use of Rabin's assassination, so must Hamas not be allowed to determine the results of the democratic elections in Israel. What is needed now is to put the elections on hold in order to cool down tempers. Nobody will gain from elections being held while buses are blowing up and the country is in the grips of a grim and somber national mood.

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Jordan: King Sends 'Arafat Message on 'Fighting Terrorism'

JN0403173496 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. 'Awad Khulayfat, interior minister, and Engineer Samir Qa'war, minister of water and irrigation, left Amman for Gaza this evening to convey a message from His Majesty King Husayn to his brother Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian National Authority.

The JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, PETRA, learned that the message deals with the recent explosions in Israel, which claimed the lives of several innocent people, and with Jordanian-Palestinian coordination in fighting terrorism.

Jordan: Prince Hasan Denounces Explosion, Phones Egypt's Mubarak

JN0403185796 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement to Jordan Television, His Highness Prince Hasan, the regent, renewed Jordan's stand — that of the king, the government, and the people — condemning and denouncing the continuation of inhumane actions against innocent Israeli citizens, which have escalated in recent days, the latest of which happened in Tel Aviv today.

His highness condemned those behind this trend, which seeks to impose its hegemony and its rejected will on all people of the region through terrorism and killing. Prince Hasan hailed the courage of the Israeli people and their determination to participate positively in peacemaking, despite of all they are facing.

He also hailed the courage of Shim'on Peres, who is working insistently to realize the dream of his people and to pair it with the dream of the people of the region by making peace.

His highness the regent expressed his condolences for the victims of today's explosion. He expressed Jordan's determination to continue the serious and honest efforts to realize peace and emphasize the dream of his majesty the king and his clear position on peace — the position that honors and cares for human beings and that calls for sparing all parties violence, destruction, and killing, and overcoming the obstacles facing this march, which wants to serve human dignity and realize of human aspirations.

His highness the regent expressed support for the call by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak for an international conference on combating terrorism, which requires international efforts.

His Highness Prince Hasan, the regent and crown prince, phoned His Excellency Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, this evening and discussed the latest developments in the region, today's terrorist act, and joint efforts to confront these acts.

His highness the regent expressed support for the Egyptian president's call for an international conference on efforts to combat terrorism.

Jordan: Crown Prince Hasan Denounces Tel Aviv Bombing

TA0403203796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1945 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Jordan's Crown Prince Hasan by Arye Gus on 4 March; place not given — recorded; in English]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] I want you to know that we share in the horror and the anger over what has happened in the last few hours. We are watching with sadness and indeed with a sense of rage over what is happening in terms of people-to-people relations, in terms of the hopes for peace, and all I can say is that we are not only condemning and denouncing the perpetrators of these criminal acts. But, as I mentioned to Prime Minister Peres in an earlier conversation and to Foreign Minister Baraq, we stand with the government and the people of Israel in doing whatever we can to work jointly against terror in this region.

[Gus, in Hebrew] What can the Kingdom of Jordan do against terrorism in the region?

[Hasan] The communication I had earlier with the president of Egypt, President Mubarak, included reference to the Egyptian proposal over the need for a conference to denounce terror, and of course, it is our feeling that moderate Arab countries cannot effectively continue without outreach and without a practical.... [Gus interrupts to translate to Hebrew]

But I think that in addition to this position taken by the United States, and the EU, and indeed by the civilized world, we in the region have to take initiatives of our own, and I hope that the time has come maybe through the sadness and the tragic feelings that we share, to act and act now, in calling for formal steps and for formal cooperation against terror and terrorist acts.

[Gus] Prince Hasan, I would not be wrong by saying that there is an expectation here in Israel that the Jordanian Kingdom, the Hashemite Kingdom, will maybe act

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more harshly, more fiercely, against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leaders and terrorists inside Jordan.

[Hasan] I want to emphasize that we have no terrorist acts emanating from Jordan. I want to emphasize that in terms of the different militant groups, our position is very clear: We are committed not only to the spirit and the letter of our treaty with Israel, we are also committed to ourselves in such positions. We are constant with our position: Over many years we have opposed militancy and opposed terror. I would like to remind the Israeli public that we were possibly among the few Arab countries to denounce the tragic killings in the Munich Olympic Games all those years ago, and we will be consistent with ourselves and our security service will continue to make this point clear, that we are prepared to stand by our commitments, that we are transparent, that we will continue to do everything we can. But, of course, we are talking of the region, and in this region, of course, we are not the only country neighboring Israel, and my hope effectively is that the same call will be respected by all capitals in this region.

[Gus] Would you join a call which we have heard lately to other Arab states to forbid Hamas or Islamic Jihad actions?

[Hasan] We would forbid any militant action against the State of Israel in violation of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel.

[Gus] And this call has been directed to Syria as well?

[Hasan] Very clearly understood here. I hope it will be understood there and in other capitals.

[Gus] Your Highness, what is the attitude of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan towards Hamas or any other militants living in other Arab states?

[Hasan] Our attitude is very unequivocal: We are clear in saying that if you envisage any acts of violence in violation of the spirit of the peace process, then you are making yourself vulnerable to a reaction, for which you will have to shoulder the responsibility for your action.

[Gus] Is there place for a joint Israeli-Jordanian action against terrorist acts?

[Hasan] Well, clearly our position is a shared position, our commitment is a shared commitment, but I don't think that in the context of communications with the general public through the media, that I can say anymore, but certainly we are very angry and we are very resolute in our stand.

Jordan: Hasan, al-Kabariti Phone Peres, Baraq on Explosion

JN0403193896 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1838 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Prince Hasan and Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti phoned Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres a short while ago and expressed their condolences for the victims of the terrorist explosion. They asked that these condolences be conveyed to the families of the victims and the Israeli people.

His highness hailed the determination of Peres and the Israeli people to proceed with the peace process until peace that benefits all people of the region is reached.

His highness the crown prince and the prime minister made a similar phone call to Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq. The discussions dealt with the latest developments in light of today's operation.

Jordan: Prime Minister Comments on Bombing, Leaves for U.S.

JN0503083096 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti left Amman this morning for New York to join His Majesty King Husayn on his visit to the United States, which begins tomorrow. Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir and Central Bank Governor Dr. Ziyad Fariz left with al-Kabariti. The prime minister was seen off by Transport Minister Engineer Nasir al-Lawzi and a number of officials.

In a press statement on the bombing incident in Tel Aviv yesterday, the prime minister said: What happened, and is happening, is a serious action. I honestly believe that the sides carrying out such actions are calling once again for reoccupying the West Bank and Gaza and for assassinating and killing the possibility of establishing a Palestinian state. This is a criminal action not only against innocent people but also against the Palestine question and the cause which these sides claim they are fighting for.

Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir said in reply to a question about the importance of his majesty's visit to the United States: His Majesty King Husayn travels to the United States every year around this time to undergo routine checkups. The visit is also an opportunity to discuss bilateral ties in light of the recent developments in the region and the criminal incidents over the past few days. In addition, his majesty will

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discuss U.S. military aid to Jordan, which we expect will be approved soon.

Jordan: AL-DUSTUR Urges End to Cycle of Violence

JN0503114496 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 5 Mar 96 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "Save Peace From the Grips of Violence"]

[FBIS Translated Text] One cannot but feel sorry and angry at the continuation of the hateful bloody cycle, which not only targets innocent people and unarmed civilians, but also seeks to kill the peace process and the opportunity to live the secure and stable life that is aspired to by all peoples of the region after decades of wars, blood, tragedies, and bloody conflict.

The merciless bombings are an ultimate escalation of bloody violence that is neither approved by any law nor accepted by any logic or conscience. These bombings have taken a serious turn, which, if not stopped for good, will threaten all people in the region, shatter their hopes and aspirations, and lead them to a dark tunnel of hatred, death, and destruction.

In light of this increasingly impending danger, efforts should be made to combat and wipe out this terrifying phenomenon by exercising self-restraint and rationality, by denying the anti-peace camp the chance to blow up the peace process as they seek to do, and by entrenching the bases of the peace process that were laid down through the willpower, determination, and courage of all parties and forces that believe in the ambitions and hopes of the peoples aspiring for security, stability, and life.

Out of its belief in the need to preserve the peace dividends and out of its rejection of all forms of terrorism and violence in relations among nations and peoples, Jordan moved quickly to tackle the situation ensuing from the recent bombings and their repercussions. This move was represented by His Majesty King Husayn's message to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, His Highness Crown Prince Hasan's contact with Egyptian President Mubarak, and contacts with the Israeli Government.

Jordan strongly believes that violence and terrorism will only yield more losses and counter violence and all will stand to lose. All will then pay the price of the crazy acts that do not serve any objective or purpose. We hope that the cycle of bloody violence stops. We also hope that its perpetrators will realize that they are pushing the Palestinian people and Palestinian cause into the abyss of fragmentation and loss. We hope that all will exercise self-restraint and avoid retaliatory acts that will only fan the fire.

We hope for an end to this horrible cycle. We also hope that the will of right, justice, and peace will prevail. Only the soldiers of peace and protectors of security, stability, and life will eventually triumph.

Jordan: Editorial Urges Israel To Accelerate Peace Process

JN0403213096 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 4 Mar 96 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "Peace Is the Response to Explosions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There is no doubt that the aim of the Israeli bus explosion in Jerusalem yesterday morning goes beyond the killing of innocent civilians and the spreading of terror and fear to something worse: harming the peace process itself.

Aware of the aims of the bombing of Israeli civilian buses, Jordan strongly condemned such bloody and horrible acts. It has thus acted in harmony with the Palestinian, Arab, and international positions, which consider launching a war at the expense of civilians a terrorist act that deserves to be condemned in the strongest of words.

The bombings, which have resulted in tightening the grip of occupation and making the lives of the Palestinian citizens very difficult, indicate an intention to undermine the peace process or obstruct its implementation on the ground at a time when the several important political dates related to the Palestinian track are drawing closer.

We call on the Israeli Government to deny those behind the bus explosions the chance to destroy the peace process and to prevent them from reaping the fruit of such a policy, which harms Palestinians and Israelis alike. The government should do so by accelerating the peace process and widening the area of coexistence, instead of resorting to security measures, suppression, and closure, which have been tested throughout the years of occupation.

Peace is the only effective response to such operations, which are bound to come to an end when the Palestinian people attain their just and comprehensive peace, and not the attempts to find an excuse to blame the Palestinians for these acts and for the security failures, especially since the first victim of such actions is the peace camp, on both sides.

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Jordan: Al-Kabariti Replies To Deputies, Condemns Iraqi Leadership

JN0403135496 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1127 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Speech by Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti during a parliamentary vote of confidence session in Amman — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] We have listened, with open hearts and minds, to all the speeches of the deputies without exception, including those who gave us valuable advice, sound views, respected opinions, and harsh criticism or criticism that seeks to improve performance and strengthen foundations. These views are invaluable, especially since they are meant to serve higher national interests and steer our ship to a safe shore, in the hope that we will win the confidence of the brothers.

My brothers and I are committed to the letter and spirit of the policy statement which we presented to your esteemed House, asking for confidence on its basis. The detailed statement we presented requires that I do not read a long reply to the discussions to we have listened over the past few days. In this context, I reaffirm our final determination to go ahead with institutionalizing and safeguarding democracy, public liberties, and citizens' rights. This will be done in practice and legislation. The details contained in my government's statement to your esteemed House will be our program of action, which we will implement, with God's help, to the maximum degree of transparency and specificity.

Stemming from its awareness of the dangers of practices that infringe on the sacred national unity of all the sons of our Jordanian people and the harm these practices cause to the cohesion of the domestic front, my government reasserts, before our esteemed House and the sons of our dear people, that it is a national unity government that is free of factionalism, regionalism, and sectarianism. The government is guided only by the Constitution, which states that there is no discrimination, prejudice, or favoritism. The Constitution underscores competence, equality, justice, and integrity in obtaining rights and fulfilling duties. [passage omitted]

Mr. Speaker, Honorable Deputies: We have asserted that we will relentlessly combat all forms of financial, administrative, and moral corruption. We will devise the appropriate mechanisms to avert the evils of corruption and punish those who practice it. I need your maximum support and cooperation, including enabling the Audit Bureau and all the other financial and administrative control agencies to undertake their responsibilities. To confirm this, my government will activate Article 42 of the Constitution, which prevents ministers from purchasing or leasing any government property and does not allow ministers to be members of the board of directors of companies, take part in business and trade activities, or receive salaries from any side or any company. [applause] [passage omitted]

Our great country — the conscience of the Arab nation and its vanguard in martyrdom and sacrifices — led by its Hashemite leadership, has offered to fraternal Iraq what one has not offered to himself or to his brother, to a degree that harmed us and our political entity and inflicted injustice on it. The efforts we made were beyond our capabilities. The support we extended to Iraq was from the livelihood of our sons who have a limited income or our unemployed youth who have no income at all and who are suffering from extreme poverty. We offered to fraternal Iraq honest advice to avert the terrible catastrophe — the greatest in our modern history — which took place without our knowledge and without any regard for Arab and Islamic brotherhood and good-neighborliness and close ties. We offered to the fraternal Iraqi people support and backing on all levels to have the foreign and domestic blockade lifted and end the suffering, tragedy, and disaster that befell the Iraqi people's children, women, elderly, and sick and hungry people. However, we find that their political leadership has increased their suffering and tribulations by its strange, confused behavior, and rejection, and then acceptance, of Security Council resolutions. The political leadership also increased the people's tribulations and suffering by persisting in violating the most basic human rights of its sons and in committing all forms of oppression, torture, and corruption. The political leadership has substituted the policy of terrorism for Iraq's sovereignty, the regime's safety for the people's safety, and the interests of a handful for the interests of the people as a whole. [passage omitted]

Jordan: Al-Kabariti on Domestic Issues, Iraq

JN0403102996 Amman AL-HADATH in Arabic 6 Mar 96 p 4

[Interview with Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti by Nidal Mansur, in Amman; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mansur] The Jordanian public says your government has foreign, and not domestic, priorities. What is your comment?

[Al-Kabariti] Perhaps the people have this impression because I was foreign minister and I also assumed the

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Foreign Ministry's portfolio in the new government. However, I am fully aware that we cannot talk about any success of foreign policy unless we succeed in addressing domestic problems. How can I, for example, seek to mend Jordan's ties with neighborly states without thinking a great deal about the problem of unemployment?

Our main concern now is to translate the royal letter of designation to the government into a reality. The letter of designation is, in essence, a domestic revolution that seeks to build a new democratic society in which social justice, welfare, peace, and security prevail.

I repeat what I said at the House of Representatives that I will not work miracles and that I do not have a magic wand to solve problems all at once. However, guided by his majesty the king and relying on the efforts of the ministerial team, the representatives of the nation, and the support of honest people, we will serve the Jordanian people as best as we can. I hope that you, along with all Jordanian politicians, will give us a chance to work and not hesitate to criticize us if we go wrong. No one is infallible. A government that is infallible is one that is inactive.

Working to resolve domestic problems is not an easy task. I cannot claim that I will end the problem of unemployment overnight. Nor can I end the problem of poverty by a decree. Also stopping the violations against democracy needs time and effort. However, the ministers and I have embarked on a comprehensive plan to achieve domestic relaxation. We are not hostile to the unions, and we respect their role in building society. My visit to the Lawyers Union was meant to restore an amicable spirit with the unions. We may differ over their mission and role. However, the solution is not estrangement, but dialogue. To prove this, we have dropped a lawsuit against the Lawyers Union. Also, to achieve the required relaxation, we took immediate measures to release those who are in administrative detention. We are in the process of forming an agency that observes the performance of the Public Security. This agency will protect citizens and allow them to submit complaints against any violation. We honestly want to turn over a new leaf.

[Mansur] But some people say that you disregarded political parties when you formed your government?

[Al-Kabariti] Let us talk frankly. I am one of those who want political parties to develop and have a stronger presence. This would be a positive development, because you can accurately see the inclinations of Jordanians. However, reality is different. Centrist parties are not united and leftist and pan-Arabist parties are not homogeneous and do not have a broad base. Only the Islamic Action Front [IAF] Party has a political base and a platform. The IAF enabled a large number of its candidates to become members of parliament. I talked to those people, asked them their opinion about participation in the government, and listened to their views about the government's priorities.

However, I did not forget to include ministers who represent leftist and centrist parties, even though I did not meet the leaders of these parties. I only met their representatives in parliament. The government plans to meet shortly with leaders of political parties to discuss problems facing party action.

[Mansur] Mr. Prime Minister, Jordanians sense that corruption is spreading and that ranking Government officials are violating the law without being taken to account. The citizens have started to say that your choice of ministers for the present government shows your government is not that serious about this issue?

[Al-Kabariti] Let me start by saying that corruption exists in many countries, even in the most deep-rooted democracies in the world. I do not believe that any government, regardless of any measures it might take, can eliminate all the centers of corruption in society and in state bodies. However, the cancer of corruption should decrease with every step made to enhance democracy. Democracy is the axe which smashes all corrupt people. It allows citizens to air their grievances. It also allows the people's representatives to impose strict supervision and to take people to account. Democracy also supports the work of the Audit Bureau, and the work of the Audit and Investigation Bureau through the Ministry of Administrative Development.

I frankly say that any government will not be a successful one if it does not combat corruption. From this premise, we will support the state departments which oversee public funds. We will cooperate with the House of Representatives to allow its members to carry out their supervisory role. I will shortly brief the House on the government's plan to combat corruption in departments where sufficient information has been collected. I call on my brother deputies to be alert and to help the government confront the sharks and those who hold sway over others as these sharks have become well versed in how to face those who confront them. Therefore, the House members should not pay attention to the rumors and whispers raised by these sharks so that their actions would not backfire on them. Also, the security bodies should cooperate with me and help me eliminate disguised corruption. We hope to have a grievances office which will give people their rights.

[Mansur] The Jordanians believe you are working for a relaxation on the domestic level. What is your stand

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on the case of Layth Shubaylat, the president of the Engineers Association, who has been in prison for quite some time?

[Al-Kabariti] We are a democratic country which believes in the supremacy of the law. This is evident in that Shubaylat was elected president of the Engineers Association while in prison. This might not happen in most of the Third World countries and even in some of the countries where democracy is deep-rooted. This question makes me again confirm that we do not target associations or are hostile to them. At the same time, we are for the supremacy of the law, and for enhancing the independence of the judiciary as there is no power above it. Frankly speaking, the government cannot interfere in a case that is being studied by the courts. However, after a sentence is passed which will reflect the truth we will refer the case to His Majesty the king who is the head of the three branches of power.

[Mansur] It is said that al-Kabariti included 22 deputies in his government to win the confidence of parliament, so that his government would not experience a crisis similar to what former heads of government had experienced.

[Al-Kabariti] You should not forget that I am a deputy, and it is only natural that my government should be a parliamentary one. This is because I respect this parliament and think that it reflects the will of the people. I will not claim that I do not need the confidence of deputies. On the contrary, I think a lot about their confidence, since it means confidence of the people. But I do not view this as only a vote for the government. I see it as confidence in the government, its program, and measures. I also see this as a criticism of it if it goes wrong. I said at the first joint session of the government and parliament that my government will act only on the basis of the common denominators which were discussed with all parliamentary blocs and independents during the consultations to form the government.

I tell my fellow deputies that their confidence in the government is a heavy responsibility and trust. Therefore, we should translate this confidence into success in all fields. I will respect the opinion of any deputy who withholds confidence and maintain contacts with this deputy to bridge the gap between us and work together for the good of this country.

[Mansur] Since you became foreign minister in Prince Zayd Bin- Shakir's government, your foreign policy has been controversial, especially with regard to the Iraqi situation. Some politicians accuse you of being a maverick and say you fabricate hostilities with neighboring countries.

[Al-Kabariti] It is not al-Kabariti's policy; it is the policy of Jordan as dictated by its interests. I am not a maverick and I certainly do not seek to fabricate hostilities with Jordan's neighbors. Since the first moment of my assumption of the Foreign Ministry, I have done my best to turn over a new leaf with Arab brothers. This is because the interests of Jordan and the Arabs dictate activating joint action, and not opening the wounds of the past.

I have not violated Jordan's firm principles. I only drove others to review these principles carefully. We never supported Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. I repeatedly said that the invasion of Kuwait was not only a mistake but a deplorable sin. We do not approve of the use of force and armies under any circumstances, let alone the use of armies to violate the sovereignty of a fraternal Arab country which has never failed to support its brothers.

We also brag about democracy and human rights. So how can we be expected to remain silent about the daily violation of human rights and democracy? I say frankly that we are pained by what happens in Iraq daily. Our policy is to maintain Iraq's unity. We are convinced that change will happen from within. Therefore, we do not plot against Iraq. This does not mean that we are satisfied with the regime, which is suffering from a lack of credibility, as proven recently.

[Mansur] How do you assess what happened to General Husayn Kamil and his brother Saddam Kamil following their return to Baghdad?

[Al-Kabariti] We can only describe what took place as a crime that cannot be excused, whether on the humanitarian, political, or ethical level. This stand is not in defense of Husayn and Saddam Kamil but an expression of the circumstances surrounding the assassination of these two men. A conspiracy was concocted against them. They were encouraged to return to Baghdad where they were killed in an ugly, criminal, and crude manner. They received assurances from the highest levels, from President Saddam Husayn, that they would not be harmed. No sooner had they arrived in Baghdad than they were tortured and terrorized and finally killed in an ugly manner. Forces of terror were given free reign to stain the guarantees of safety with red blood.

I want to pause at the question of the safe guarantees and reassurances to say that the promise made to Husayn and Saddam Kamil which led to their death were a deception. This shows that this is the only method with which the regime deals not only with its relatives, henchmen, and those close to it but with international conventions and laws, and Arab and Islamic countries. The method of deception makes one give no credibility

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to any slogan the regime might raise and this method will certainly lead the Iraqi people from a state of tribulation to tragedy and catastrophe.

[Mansur] Reports say that an Iraqi businessman was the mediator between Husayn Kamil and President Saddam. Is this true?

[Al-Kabariti] Yes, this is true. We decided to ban this man from entering Jordan.

[Mansur] Do you fear any retaliatory Iraqi reactions against Jordan for its stand on the developments in the Iraqi issue?

[Al-Kabariti] A regime which is based on falsehood and deception is a dreadful regime and a troublemaker. However, I would like to reassure all that we have taken all the measures that will safeguard the safety of Jordan and all those living on Jordanian territory. I see no reason to worry.

[Mansur] Do you believe a change in Iraq is imminent?

[Al-Kabariti] Change is inevitable. The advent of democracy necessarily means the disappearance of dictatorship. The supremacy of the law and legitimacy necessarily means that the policy of terrorism and injustice will be wiped out.

The valiant Iraqi people have the right to expect that no one interferes in their domestic affairs. However, they deserve support so that they may enjoy their freedom, unity, and sovereignty. We will certainly continue to support the Iraqi people in their quest for democracy, freedom, and the unity of the Iraqi people and Iraq's territorial integrity.

[Mansur] What about relations with the Gulf countries?

[Al-Kabariti] We managed to put behind us the misunderstanding of the Jordanian position on the Gulf war. We initiated steps to restore our relations with the brothers in the Gulf. His Majesty King Husayn's visit to Saudi Arabia opened a new era. I can say that relations have returned to what they were and will further develop. We hope that economic cooperation will be reactivated in the coming stage.

As for relations with Kuwait, they will witness tangible relaxation after the 'Id al-Fitr, god willing. We harbor amity and respect for the leadership and people of fraternal Kuwait, and expect to hold thorough contacts with the Kuwaiti brothers to discuss the details of what obstructs the restoration of relations to normal. A meeting will most probably be held with the Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister on the sidelines of the forthcoming Arab League foreign ministers' meeting.

Jordan: Regional Economic Meetings Begin; EU, Israel, U.S. Attend

JN0303212796 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 3 Mar 96

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Here in Amman, meetings of the Trade Committee of the Regional Economic Development Working Group started today. Representatives from Jordan, Egypt, Palestine, Israel, the United States, and the European Union are taking part in the two-day meeting.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Dr. Muhammad al-Simadi said the participants would discuss trade and investment activities among countries in the region and between these countries and other economic blocs.

He said the agenda for the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Regional Business Council, which will have a simultaneous meeting, would also be discussed. He said the meeting would also review the results of the roundtable workshop held in Geneva three months ago, and the report adopted by the Swiss Government on trade data in the region.

Jordan: 'Sources' Deny Government Seeking Oil From Saudis

JN0403195896 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Informed sources told AL-RA'Y that the Saudi oil pipeline, Tapline [Trans-Arabian Pipeline], to Jordan is 100 percent technically ready for operation any time the two countries decide.

The sources denied that Jordan recently asked the Saudi officials to resume the pumping of oil, which the Saudis stopped when the Gulf crisis began in 1990, under the pretext of the Jordanian debts to Saudi Arabia.

The sources said Jordan is currently satisfied with the quantities and prices of oil it receives from Iraq as payment for previous debts, in addition to the food exports to Iraq.

Jordan: House Confidence Debate Begins 2 Mar

JN0203110296 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 2 Mar 96 pp 1 7

[Report by Tariq al-Mumani]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—The Lower House of Parliament today begins debate on the policy statement presented by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, with expectations that the government could secure

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between 53 to 56 votes of confidence in the 80-member house.

Some Parliament members described the policy statement, presented on Wednesday [28 February], as unique and as containing as many aspects that fulfill the aspirations of the legislature and people to bring about changes and justice.

Expectations are that about 40 deputies would address the House during the debate, which is expected to end Monday before the vote of confidence is taken.

A number of parliamentarians saw the policy statement as comprehensive and futuristic. They described the prime minister as having full confidence in his government to implement all policies and projects that he committed himself to in the policy statement.

These deputies also said that the prime minister was very frank and clear on several topics, including the elections law, public freedoms, democracy, political parties, justice, the media, economy, and passports.

House Speaker Sa'd Hayil al-Surur said he saw the government as fully commited to fight corruption and that Mr. al-Kabariti affirmed that he would personally follow up the functions of his government.

Mr. al-Surur said all deputies would have the opportunity to express their opinion on and discuss the policy statement.

Deputy 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah, who is expected to present the position of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), said the policy statement included certain "bright aspects." But, he said, what mattered was the practical implementations of these aspects.

Dr. al-'Akayilah complemented the prime minister and described him as open minded and "a new man on the political arena who wants to succeed."

"We wish him success because the success of any official will reflect on the people," said Dr. al-'Akayilah.

The IAF has not formulated a final position on whether to give Mr. al-Kabariti a favourable vote of confidence, Dr. al-'Akayilah said.

Deputy Anwar al-Hadid, a pro-establishment figure, described the policy statement as excellent and comprehensive, touching on all aspects of life in Jordan.

Asserting that "corrupt elements" were still in the administrative system, Mr. al-Hadid said that the government includes several symbols who could be trusted and were capable of translating the policy statement into action, but, he added, some other ministers were "a burden" that may curb the development process.

The performance and decisions of the new government so far, he said, are good for the people. "I will give my vote of confidence to the government," he said.

Prime Minister al-Kabariti meanwhile continued meetings with the various parliamentary blocs and independents to explain his government's policies and positions as well as its determination to fulfill what it has promised.

Mr. al-Kabariti met with the IAF bloc, the National Bloc, the Fraternity Bloc and independent deputies. He said he was fully ready to accept constructive criticism and positive suggestions from all deputies.

He praised some deputies for their frankness and understanding that would help strengthen the democratic process and build a new Jordan on the basis of democracy, pluralism, respect for human rights and "healing the wounds caused by poverty and unemployment."

Jordan: Report Claims Legislation Used To Violate Human Rights

JN0303132696 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 3 Mar 96 pp 12,7

[By Ghalia al-'Alul "Special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—The Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR) in Jordan said Saturday it had observed an increase of violations of human rights in the Kingdom during 1995. The AOHR's annual report on human rights conditions in Jordan stated that violations of human rights were "not limited in practices, but were also-manifested in some legislation and decisions that infringed, partially or wholly, on basic and democratic rights of Jordanian people." No official response was immediately available on the report.

The report described as "serious and dangerous" what it said was the authorities' use of fire-arms while dealing with civilians. Two people were killed last year by security forces, it said. "The two cases which were reported in 1995 reflected an official violation of people's right to live," said the report. The organisation urged the government to form a committee to investigate the two incidents.

The year "1995 witnessed an increase in use by Jordanian authorities of sheer force of physical violence and torture. This resulted in grave bodily harm and injuries which required hospitalisation in some cases," the report added. It claimed that there "seem to have been a policy to escalate the use of violence to intimidate people into submission."

The 16-page report alleged that the government failed to establish dialogue with the opposition, which became

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more prominent after the signing of the peace treaty with Israel in October 94. "The Jordan government exhibited in 1995 a lack of willingness to have any substantive dialogue with the opposition which resulted in the interrogation and/or arrest of some leaders of political opposition under various charges such as slander and resisting normalisation of relations with Israel," the report said. It also said the government "resorted to legislation to give (it) legal tools and means to violate the rights of the people and their basic freedoms in the name of the law."

The AOHR said the government failed to respond to its calls to address complaints received from citizens and to coordinate with the organisation to prevent violations. "The responses of the government to letters and complaints sent to the prime minister or other officials did not exceed 12 percent," the report stated. "This attitude gives a clear indication of the lack of respect which the government accorded to the issue of human rights in 1995," the report asserted.

The report said that the organisation had received many complaints of violations of the basic rights of Jordanians. These rights, the report added, include the illegal cancellation of nationality, confiscation of passports, and refusal to allow Jordanian mothers from admitting non-Jordanian children into Jordan. It said the directorate of intelligence was interfering with appointments to the civil service.

The organisation criticised a ruling by the Higher Council for the Interpretation of the Constitution that Parliament could not impeach a minister during an extraordinary session of the legislature. It said the council composed of four senators and five judges, acted as a constitutional court, for which there is no legal provision in Jordan.

The report referred to the case of Layth Shubaylat, head of the Engineers Association and a former deputy who was arrested for sedition, insulting and criticising His Majesty the King. It said Mr. Shubaylat's request for bail was refused although the law permitted it. "Mr. Shubaylat's case is a political one and the exceptional measures which were taken in this case are in clear violation of laws," the report stated.

It cited other cases in which it claimed ex-detainees were refused reinstatement to previous jobs and their passports and identification cards were confiscated.

The report also criticised what it said was the use of physical torture against prisoners and said that the organisation had received many complaints from citizens in this regard.

The AOHR said that 1995 also witnessed a violation of the citizens' right of freedom of thought and expression. It called on the government to allow the private sector to own and operate electronic media, which, it said, will enhance the public's freedom of expression. The report charged that administrative governors denied the citizens' basic rights to hold seminars and lectures, adding that the authority of these governors should curbed.

As for people's right to form associations, the report said the AOHR received no complaints pertaining to this issue.

In conclusion, the report said, it does not "claim itself to be conclusive in covering all human right violations in Jordan in 1995 due to many reasons, most important of which is the intimidation of people by the security forces."

Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has pledged to protect human rights and announced that he would form councils to supervise the activities of the security departments, including the Interior Ministry, which had been accused of violating human rights.

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Lebanon: Commentary—U.S. Most Concerned Over Jerusalem Explosion

NC0503105196 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Commentary from the "Spotlight on Events" program: "The U.S. Project Is Faltering"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Soon after reports about the explosion in Jerusalem [day before] yesterday reached U.S. officials, these officials began to shout in anger. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher cut short his foreign tour of Central America and returned to Washington to discuss with U.S. President Bill Clinton the dangerous events and the moves necessary to absorb the repercussions of what has happened. Christopher attacked what he called the forces of terrorism who oppose the settlement. He called on all the sides and countries taking part in the settlement process to condemn and isolate these forces of terrorism. He contacted Yasir 'Arafat and asked him to wage an indiscriminate and unmerciful war against the Islamic movements such as Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and al-Jihad.

It is true that the explosion took place in occupied Jerusalem, but the worry and shake-up are concentrated in Washington. The explosion shook the settlement project and made it wobble. The project is American before it is Israeli, and the Arabs have virtually no interests in it. It is an American project that safeguards the United States' economic and security interests in the region. Therefore, it is not strange that the U.S. Administration is the most affected and disturbed by the incidents.

The operation put Shim'on Peres, the U.S.-Zionist man-for-the-settlement, in a difficult and crucial position. This means that the United States' man in Israel, on whom the United States is counting to achieve the settlement, is being subjected to a difficult test, particularly since the recent operations have decreased his popularity and increased the popularity of his opponent, the rightist Likud Bloc leader Benyamin Netanyahu.

This U.S. concern following the recent operations stems from the fact that the newborn peace is still in the intensive care unit. This newborn peace cannot be subjected to any influences or changes. So, what happens when these influences are violent and harsh? Such strong quakes could be the death of this peace process, thus making it lose any desire to live. This means that the U.S. strategic wagers in the region would founder.

Therefore, Washington intervened quickly and directly to put pressure not only on the Palestinian side but also on the other Arab sides — Syria in particular — to wrench stances that could cool down the atmosphere and compensate for the blow. Such stances condemn what happened, thus constituting a political gain for Peres and the U.S. Government to compensate for the security setback that has inflamed the Zionist people. The first thing the Zionist people did was to scream at Peres and tell him to resign, before they even called for revenge against the Arabs.

Peres, who took office after Rabin's death, has been behaving in a very confident manner, as though he were in total control and perfectly able to steer the Zionist ship toward the various choices in the settlement. He behaved as though he had a clear and firm vision for the future to which he is now aspiring. Peres is now behaving like an obsessed general who is ready to take extreme stances. He almost forgets that he is the man for negotiations and settlement. He declares war on Hamas, freezes implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, and freezes negotiations with Damascus. He makes announcements about options before him which, under normal circumstances, we did not hear even from the generals and rightist leaders. Peres, who has been cornered by the recent incidents, has proceeded to unhesitatingly use the language of his foes. He doesn't realize that borrowing this language condemns him before his foes and before the public, gives absolute credibility to the proposals of his rightist foes, and confirms that their stances in the conflict with him are correct.

Lebanon: Prime Minister Denies Reports of Possible Cabinet Change

NC0503090696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has denied reports about a possible cabinet resignation or minor change. He maintained that such reports are completely unfounded. The prime minister added: After everything that has happened recently, let us all, including the government, think the matter over, for the sake of the nation's interests. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: 4 Israeli Troops Killed, 9 injured in Ambush

NC0503070296 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Security sources in Marj 'Uyun have reported that at around 2110 local time last night, an Israeli patrol was attacked by an armed ambush on the Hula-Markaba road and clashed with an armed group. The clash led to the deaths of four Israeli soldiers, among them one colonel; nine soldiers were wounded.

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Two members of the armed group were killed while a third managed to escape.

AFP confirmed the Israeli casualties and noted that the clash occurred with Palestinian fedayeen. An Israeli military source also confirmed the death of four Israeli soldiers, and the wounding of eight, in a clash with a group of fighters from Hizballah near Manarah village on the Lebanese-Israeli borders. A mine exploded under some soldiers who were trying to track down a Hizballah group that was trying to infiltrate.

Lebanon: New Palestinian Group Claims Ambush on Israeli Unit

NC0503072896 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement distributed last night, a previously unknown Palestinian organization calling itself the Palestinian Islamic Revolutionary Army [al-Jaysh al-Thawri al-Islami al-Filistini] claimed responsibility for the operation [against an Israeli patrol in southern Lebanon on 4 March]. The text of the statement was broadcast by Hizballah's al-Manar Television.

The statement said in part: An Islamic Revolutionary Army group set an ambush for an Israeli patrol whose mission was to protect the borders of the Marj 'Uyun settlement on the al-'Abbad road, which runs parallel to the Lebanese borders. The ambush killed and injured a number of people.

Lebanon: Labor Leader Claims Victory in 'This Round,' Urges Dialogue

MM0103150996 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 1 Mar 96 p 3

[Interview with Ilyas Abu-Rizq, leader of the Lebanese General Labor Federation, by Daniel al-Dahir in Beirut on 29 February]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Al-Dahir] What is your next move, now that the curfew has been lifted as of 1400?

[Abu-Rizq] We have called a meeting of the Executive Council of the General Labor Federation [GLF] by Tuesday afternoon at the GLF headquarters (in Bidaru [as transliterated]), to discuss the current situation, assess this phase, discuss developments, and take appropriate measures to continue the movement.

[Al-Dahir] Will you uphold the decision to stage strikes and demonstrations?

[Abu-Rizq] I cannot make this decision on my own; it will be made by the Executive Council. We have ended the 29 February phase and implemented the decision made by our constitutional institutions. We will again ask the constitutional institutions, starting with the Executive Council, to meet in order to discuss developments and plan our move.

[Al-Dahir] If you decide to stage strikes and demonstrations and the state reinstates the curfew, will matters continue this way?

[Al-Dahir] I do not know how matters will continue. If each time we decide to strike and demonstrate the state decides to impose a curfew, we will enter a maelstrom. I do not know if this will end; therefore, we can only talk hypothetically — and when it happens we shall talk about it then.

[Al-Dahir] Did contacts take place (yesterday) with the government, and has there been any initiative from the Chamber of Deputies?

[Abu-Rizq] There have not been any contacts from officials since the dialogue ended. The GLF and the follow-up committee ended it from Wednesday morning until this evening (yesterday) [29 February]. [sentence as published] We believe that dialogue is the best way, the basis for our action and the approach we favor to achieve our demands. It was the government that shut off the dialogue three months ago. Three months ago, we sent a letter to the prime minister asking him to set a date for a meeting with the GLF, and to date, he has not done so. That is what led the GLF to take this negative approach and decide to stage strikes and demonstrations on 29 February. We favor and are open to dialogue, as it is our key approach to achieving demands.

[Al-Dahir] If the dialogue is reopened and the government adheres to its position on the issue of canceling the decision to strike and the media law, and you persist in your position, how will the issue be resolved?

[Abu-Rizq] If each team continues to stand behind its lines and positions, no progress will be achieved. The government removed freedoms and employees' rights; annulled the agreement with the GLF, did not implement it; and ended the dialogue. If we restart the dialogue, it must be serious and genuine, and not a dialogue of the deaf, nor should we meet to say that we are holding a dialogue for dialogue's sake. We want a dialogue that will lead to positive, concrete, fast results, especially with regard to the issue of freedoms — and, particularly, the revoking of the decision to ban demonstrations. As far as the GLF is concerned, this has become the fundamental decision and the spearhead, because by revoking this decision, we can guarantee demands in the future. As long as there are decisions of this type, restrictions on freedoms, oppression, voices being stifled, and media organs being shackled and tamed; and

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as long as we are afraid that freedoms will suffer in the future, all these demands will face obstacles, even the demands which have been granted can be taken back — because we have gotten used to the government taking back the demands and rights achieved over decades.

[Al-Dahir] Is the winner the government or the GLF?

[Abu-Rizq] The GLF has made some gains and won this round, but not the battle. It is just a round and the start of the battle. The battle continues and is open. It is a battle to achieve the fundamental principal demands, under the banner headlines of freedom and bread, the banners of our struggle and march. The people are marching behind these two banners which scare the government, because it fears the truth.

Lebanon: Lebanese Army Seizes 2 Planes From PFLP-GC

NC0503080196 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Citing security organizations in Ba'labakk, AFP has reported that the Lebanese Army seized two small airplanes from a warehouse of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC]. The sources explained that the two German-made planes were seized this past January in Sa'd Nayil. A similar plane tried to attack areas in northern Israel but exploded in mid-air over southern Lebanon on 20 February. The pilot was killed in the explosion.

Lebanon: PFLP-GC Official Denies Army Seized Gliders

NC0503115496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jum'ah al-'Abdallah, media official in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] based in al-Biqa', has denied the report from Ba'labakk carried by AFP to the effect that glider planes were seized in the al-Biqa' area. He said: We do not have such equipment in the aforementioned area. He pointed out that the Lebanese Army is a friendly allied army that supports the national resistance in confronting the Zionist enemy.

Lebanon: Hizballah Aide—Dialogue With al-Hariri Not Suspended

MM0403151296 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 5

[Report by Tha'ir 'Abbas: "Hasan al-Khalil, Hizballah's Political Official, Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Entrusting Security to the Army Puts Greater Burden on Lebanese Treasury Than Responding to Some Workers' Demands"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut — Hasan al-Khalil, political assistant to the secretary general of Lebanon's Hizballah, has stated that the Lebanese Government's decision to enlist the Army's help in maintaining security "is not in any way directed against the party, but it erases all the achievements the government claims to have made." He added that "that decision has inflicted on the public and the Army material, moral, political, security, and economic losses far more than it would have cost the government to respond to some material and social demands."

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, al-Khalil denied that the contacts between Hizballah and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri had stopped. He stressed that "the party has nothing personal against Prime Minister al-Hariri."

Al-Khalil added: "We in Hizballah have two main tasks in the Lebanese arena. The first is resistance against all aspects of the Israeli occupation, and the second is looking after people's rights and demands and caring for the problems of the public, the workers and the toilers who now comprise the vast majority of the Lebanese people." He pointed out that "conditions are deteriorating daily as a result of the government's policies." He added that "the deteriorating social conditions have turned a large percentage of the Lebanese people into a crushed or poor class. Faced with that situation, Hizballah cannot remain idle.... We have frankly expressed our opinion—which is that we support and back the workers' demands."

He was asked: Did you participate in a "mediation" between the workers and the government? He replied: "We do not deny that we mainly advised some circles concerned, in the government and outside it; that it was necessary to hold an appropriate and responsible dialogue that would lead to an understanding of the rights and demands of a large sector of Lebanese society. The dialogue started and several meetings were held, but we were surprised to see that whenever a door was opened the government closed it on the pretext that it would exhaust the state's treasury, or by making promises without guarantees."

On the results of these contacts, he said: "Regrettably, we have felt that the government has turned its back and become intransigent. I can say that we did not even sense any seriousness on the prime minister's part. He tried to escape from the problem by understating and minimizing the existing crisis between the people and the government with the aim of turning the matter over to the economic bodies as if these bodies, not

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the government, were responsible for people's rights. We have not until now exposed the truth about the [government's] turning its back on the problem. The dialogue was closed and the government is pursuing an arrogant policy."

Al-Khalil was asked: How do you view the cabinet's decision to give the Army the responsibility of maintaining security in the country? He replied: The cabinet's "ploy" has brought the country to the brink of the abyss. The aim of the decision is to put the Army on a collision course with all sectors of society that have for decades been waiting for that institution to unite and shoulder its national and pan-Arab duties. We saw the cabinet's decision as an attempt to take the Army backward. We know that some officials and some political and military leaderships had sacrificed much to bring the military establishment up to its present level. He added: "When the cabinet asks the Army to maintain security, it means escaping responsibility and it means that the current government cannot defend itself as far as the country's stability is concerned. That provides the best evidence that the government has failed to maintain security and stability."

Al-Khalil was asked: Some contacts have started with Prime Minister al-Hariri, contacts in which you took part. Does this fresh escalation mean the cessation of the dialogue between you? He replied: We have nothing personal against Prime Minister al-Hariri. I headed the group that held contacts with the prime minister. At our meetings with him we always raised issues objectively and face to face. We have no ill intentions against individuals, or against Prime Minister al-Hariri specifically. I think al-Hariri sensed that himself. These contacts with Prime Minister al-Hariri have not stopped. They will continue, and our position does not mean ending the dialogue with him.

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Syria: Press Says 'Only Peace' Can Guarantee Security, Stability

JN0503064396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0550 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Under the headline "The March Revolution, Firm Position and Comprehensive Vision," AL-BA'TH asserts that after 33 years, the glorious March revolution confirms once again that it was the most important juncture in our national history and the foundation stone for building a strong, modern, and invulnerable Syria. [passage omitted]

AL-BA'TH concludes: Syria regards the peace process as a strategic option that must lead to the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace, which restores everybody's rights in full. This peace, as daily events show, can eliminate all hotbeds of tension, chaos, and violence in the region. Only peace can guarantee to the people of the region the security, stability, and prosperity to which they aspire.

In a commentary under the headline "Peace Requires Application," AL-THAWRAH asserts that peace has firm principles and foundations; mainly, justice and comprehensiveness. These principles are endorsed by the resolutions of international legitimacy and must be implemented.

AL-THAWRAH says: Israel has so far not done this. Syria has responded positively to the efforts and principles of peace. It also emphasized its desire for peace and concern for it on the basis of implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy. Syria can never abandon its firm demand for full Israeli withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 lines. Peace must be just and comprehensive and must include equal arrangements between the two sides.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Just a reminder, Syria provided all possible opportunities to make the peace process succeed. The last was Syria's participation in the Maryland talks. Israel, however, continued to set traps to the peace process.

The paper concludes: In light of this, progress in the peace process will continue to depend on a change in Israel's position toward complying with the principles of peace. The only remaining hope for such a change is achieving progress in the talks. This depends on the pressure the United States can put on Israel to make it comply with the foundations of peace.

Syria: Editorial Says Peace Only Way To Ensure Security

JN0503092296 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English 4 Mar 96 p 5

[Editorial by Walid Shihadah: "Peace Ensures Security"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The way of thinking of occupiers is the same whoever they are and examples of this thinking are countless. In the American war of independence, Great Britain Branded the American patriots who were fighting for freedom as outlaws.

The French colonialists fabricated a lie that Algeria is French. They also exercised an annihilation campaign against the Algerian liberation revolution. They continued to do so until Gen. De Gaulle gave his recognition of Algeria's independence.

Israel which occupied the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and the Golan in the 1967 aggression, and later some parts of Lebanon in its aggressions of 1978 and 1982 also practised all forms of oppression, Judaization and collective punishment. They pursued the policy of bone-breaking against the Intifada heroes, using the pretext of its own security which can never be any other thing than its occupation of Arab land and making it a fait accompli by force.

The United Nations has adopted dozens of resolutions which emphasize the need for ending the Israeli occupation. Yet, successive Israeli governments have kept on disregarding those resolutions, and recruited their media machines, locally and internationally, to accuse the patriotic resistance inside the occupied territories of being a terrorist movement, as though the struggle against occupation is not a legitimate right and recognized as such by the UN charter.

When former U.S. President George Bush declared his initiative on 7 March 1991, which considered the implementation of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis of the realization of just and comprehensive peace in the region, Israel participated in the Madrid conference after it gave its preconditioned "yes."

During the ensuing negotiations in Washington, it became crystal clear to the whole world that Israel rejects to exchange land for peace, that it obstructs every constructive effort for the achievement of just peace, that what its seeks is no more than partial settlements outside the framework of UN Resolutions 242 and 338, such as the Oslo Accords which have done away with the land- for-peace principle. Factors of tension increased and the accords seemed unable to solve any of the problems that existed in the occupied territories.

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As a proof of this is the increase of tension after the signing of the accords.

In this climate, Peres who always declares his readiness for peace is now demanded to take practical attitudes that halt the real reasons for tragedies and help provide the practical elements that lead to building real peace. He ought to avoid anything that further complicates the situation. This can only be realized through implementing the principle of trading land for peace and the relevant UN resolutions. The policy of oppression, if continued, will only lead to further tension and will never solve the problem.

When the SYRIA TIMES published its editorial under the title "The land for peace formula," the author wanted to draw attention to the fact that justice is real prop of peace [as published] and that Israel ought to take the lesson from the incidents that took place in Jerusalem and Ashqelon, that Israel ought to create the proper circumstances that save both Arabs and Israelis any tragedy that might occur.

Israel's insistence on getting gains from the peace process at the expense of the Arabs, its placing obstacles and its hesitation whenever the question of just and comprehensive peace is due will not ensure security. Peace does. President Clinton said: "The security of either party must never be at the expense of the other party."

Syria: Commentary Analyzes Lack of Progress in Maryland Talks

JN0403184096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1236 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: It is clear that the round of Syrian-Israeli negotiations that began in Maryland last week has so far resulted in nothing that indicates the peace process is heading toward action or that it is expected to proceed toward the goal established for it at the Madrid conference. Obstacles are still paralyzing the process and preventing it from heading toward a just and true peace.

Perhaps the largest of these obstacles, which Israel does not seem to be ready to remove, is embodied by its disregard of the resolutions of the international legitimacy, its attempt to circumvent them, and its refusal to accept the land-for-peace principle. Peace will never be possible until this principle is adopted as a basis for the peace process. The peace process begins with it. It is a guide to the shortest and safest ways to achieve security, safety, and tranquility for the region and its people.

At any rate, we should wait for the results of this round of negotiations. Perhaps it will come up with something new that indicates Israel has started to realize that true peace, which restores rights to their owners, is the greatest guarantee of security in the region and something that will avert danger. No force, regardless of how big it is, can secure the guarantee that peace can secure.

We believe it is time for Israel to realize it is impossible to achieve peace without implementing UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, and the contents of the U.S. initiative. The liberation of land from occupation and the restoration of rights to their owners, and nothing else, are the bases and pillars of peace. Based on this, Israel should reconsider its stands — without arrogance and deceit — and abandon the illusion that it can impose its will and its own peace on the Arabs without paying attention to their right to liberate their land, determine their future, and impose their sovereignty over every inch of their national soil.

Israel should discard unwise emotions and sentiments and deal with the developments with an open mind and sound objectivity in order to make sure that, regardless of how long it takes, right will not be lost under any circumstances. Things should be put in their proper place, and the international legitimacy and law should triumph.

At any rate, observers are still waiting for the good news that the crisis has been eased, particularly because the United States' participation reinforces hopes for the possibility of persuading Israel to follow the path of real peace, which is the only way to save the region from the state of war that prevails in it, whose dark shadows will affect world peace and security and its peoples' interests. Undoubtedly, the United States has the means and the logic of persuasion to break Israel's intransigence and force it to stop tampering with the peace process.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Welcomes Rabbani's Efforts To End Afghan Crisis

LD0303192396 Tehran IRNA in English 1743 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, March 3, IRNA — Head of the Afghan group Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party], Golboddin Hekmatyar, has said that President Borhaneddin Rabbani's government has adopted a sound policy of compromise with the opposition forces and the decision to establish peace and understanding in the country should be appreciated.

The daily SHAHADAT, organ of the Hezb-e Eslami, in its latest issue quoted Hekmatyar as saying that the new stand of the Afghan Government could help bring about peace in the country, a trend which has been supported by the coordination assembly and Hezb-e Eslami over the last four years.

According to the paper, Hekmatyar has said the real friends of the government and the Muslim people of Afghanistan will surely welcome any effort to resolve the Afghan crisis.

But he also accused the Kabul government of pushing from the scene some influential mojahedin groups over the last four years, and said that this would not benefit the government and would lead to its downfall sooner or later.

He, however, maintained his belief in a negotiated solution as the only way out of the current crisis, added the daily.

Hekmatyar's group has embarked on long and concentrated talks with representatives of the kabul government over the past month, and according to reports, the two sides are on the verge of a breakthrough to bury their differences, and form a political- military coalition.

Hekmatyar served as prime minister under Rabbani before his split with the government and the subsequent armed struggle.

Afghanistan: Mojaddedi Favors Joint Action in Cease-Fire Talks

LD0103204596 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0230 GMT

[FBIS Translated Text] Any agreement should be signed jointly by all the member parties of the Supreme Coordination Council (SCC). This point was made at an interview by the leader of the Jabha-ye Nejat-e Melli [National Liberation Front], esteemed Professor Sebghatollah Mojaddedi [former president].

He said that in order to end fighting in the country, negotiations should be held with other parties in a principled manner and in accordance with the decisions of the SCC. However, member parties of the SCC should be kept informed on the progress of the negotiations and their support sought. He added that the signing of any agreement is the task of the SCC, and no member party has the right to sign agreements with others independently.

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami To Continue Talks With Kabul Authorities

LD0103205396 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0230 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Negotiations between Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] and the Kabul administration are acceptable to us: This point was made during an interview by the Jonbesh-e Melli Eslami [National Islamic Movement] spokesman in Islamabad, Mawlawi 'Abdol Baqi Turkestani.

He said that during its recent meeting in Peshawar the Supreme Coordination Council (SCC) was informed by Hamayun Jarir, representative of the Hezb-e Eslami, about the Sarowbi talks [between Hezb-e Eslami and the Kabul administration]. He said that the Kabul administration, unlike in the past, showed flexibility in its attitude and put forward important proposals.

Mawlawi Turkestani said that the SCC has resolved that Hezb-e Eslami should continue talks with Kabul administration to find out how far [President] Rabbani's administration is sincere in its claims of transferring power and establishing a transitional government. He added that if negotiations prove that Rabbani is really prepared to transfer power, then negotiations will be held between Rabbani's administration and the SCC for [words indistinct].

Meanwhile, Dr. Taleb, representative of the Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity] Party in Peshawar, said that the Sarowbi talks were also acceptable to them.

Afghanistan: Government Denies Renewed Conflict With Dostam Forces

LD0403153796 Tehran IRNA in English 1440 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, March 4, IRNA — The Afghan Defense Ministry has denied news reports that a new conflict had been erupted between goverament forces and the Islamic National Movement's militia led by General Dostam in northern provinces of the country.

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A Defense Ministry spokesman, Amrollah, told IRNA on Monday that in spite of intensive military movements by Dostam's forces in Salang, Khanjan and Qal'eh-ye Sarkari, no conflict has broken out in the said areas.

He added that the movement transferred infantry troops and mechanized equipment from Polkhomri, center of Paghlan Province, to northern regions of Salang, Khanjan and Qal'eh-ye Sarkari last week. The move has been followed by some reports predicting an impending struggle instigated by General Dostam in northern Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, some sources have already reported conflicts between government forces and the Islamic National Movement in Qal'eh-ye Sarkari and northwestern parts of the Ghowr Province.

Afghanistan: Retired General Warns of Possible Pakistan, Iran War

LD0203200896 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan's retired General Hamid Gul [former military intelligence chief] said Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] and Jam'iyat-e Eslami [Islamic Society] were important pillars of the Islamic movement. He said: Those who create differences between Hezb-e Eslami and Jam'iyat-e Eslami are friends of neither Afghanistan nor Pakistan. It is an international plot [word indistinct] the aim of which is to damage relations between Pakistan and Iran.

General Hamid Gul added: Our Foreign Ministry plays the role of [word indistinct] between the Taleban and Dostam. Our leaders should take the national interest into account. They should vigorously work for unity among jihadi forces. The present Pakistani Government has gone too far in its opposition to Rabbani and friendship with the Taleban.

General Hamid Gul said: If the Jam'iyat commander, Ismail Khan, attacks Herat, there will be war between Iran and Pakistan.

Afghanistan: BAKHTAR Comments on President's Visit to Iran

LD0303212096 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran is hosting Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani. BAKHTAR political correspondent comments in this respect:

The Afghan president's visit to Tehran, which is taking place at the invitation of the Iranian president, is an important step toward the restoration of peace in Afghanistan. The Iranian Government condemned Pakistan's interference after its intervention in the southwestern zone of Afghanistan and has called for the cessation of interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. When Benazir Bhutto, the prime minister of Pakistan, visited Iran a few months ago, the Iranian Government presented to her evidence that showed Pakistan's had interfered in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic State of Afghanistan have similar views as regards the current problems of our country, i.e., the cessation of foreign interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs. Since the victory of the Islamic revolution in Afghanistan, Tehran has not closed down its embassy in Kabul, and its diplomatic representative in Kabul continued to discharge his duties during the harshest times. A glance at events in Afghanistan shows that Iran always wanted to consolidate its relations with the Muslims of Afghanistan. The removal of misunderstanding between the two countries, which has been carried out with full astuteness, is proof of this view. The efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran, from the Tehran conference to mediation between Afghanistan and the government of Benazir Bhutto, to end fighting in Afghanistan is very clear to the people of Afghanistan. This shows the selfless efforts of that country to ensure peace in Afghanistan.

Therefore, the Afghan president's visit to Iran is in the interests of peace in Afghanistan and the reduction of tension in the region. Iran surely enjoys sufficient international and economic capabilities. The visit [words indistinct] can assess various ways of exploiting effective measures for putting an end to war in Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan are of the opinion that relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran are the best example of good neighborly relations between two countries. Surely, this can [words indistinct]. Such an example will once again show to other countries around Afghanistan that mutually beneficial relations are better than any kind of interference. Those who interfere have not achieved anything in the interests of the people of our country. [words indistinct] Mutually beneficial relations can be effective in bilateral relations as well as in ensuring peace in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: Spokesman Says Reports of Clashes in North Baseless

LD0403163096 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0230 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports of clashes between Hezb-e Eslami and Jonbesh-e [Melli-e Eslami]

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forces are completely unfounded, said Hezb-e Eslami spokesman Qariborrahman Sa'ed in an interview. He said reports about clashes between Hezb-e Eslami and Jonbesh-e Melli forces in Baghlan Province are absolutely untrue. He added: A few days ago small-scale clashes took place in the province between local commanders. The High Coordination Council intervened and within a short time prevented the continuation of fighting.

Afghanistan: Taleban Artillery Pounds Kabul's Kheyr Khaneh Area

LD0403142896 Tehran IRNA in English 1232 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, March 4, IRNA — Kheyr Khaneh region in northwestern Kabul was targeted by long-range artillery fire of Taleban forces for the first time in the past two years, it was announced here Monday. The security commission of Kabul in an announcement said [words indistinct], the remotest point to the Taleban positions, caused no casualty. The announcement further added that the shells hit the heights overlooking the region, thus causing no damage or casualty.

Kheyr Khaneh region, due to security reasons, is sheltering the majority of the one-million population of the capital city Kabul.

The Taleban group had recently announced that it would pound the region where most of the government officials are residing.

Afghanistan: Kabul Reports Taleban Rockets Hit Residential Areas

LD0403163896 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1430 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Taleban fired rockets on Kabul again today. BAKHTAR reports that last night and today Benazir Bhutto's Taleban fired eight rockets into residential areas of Kabul. As a result [word indistinct] of Kabul residents were injured. The rockets, which were fired from the south of Kabul, also damaged three houses.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Ruling Party Reelects Khaleda Zia as Leader

BK0403164096 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1600 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Two hundred newly elected members of the sixth parliament took oath of office at Sangsad Bhavan [Parliament House] this afternoon. The MP's included Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and a number of her cabinet colleagues who returned in the 15 February parliamentary elections. Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali conducted the oath of office to the MP's. Earlier, the speaker himself took oath as member of parliament under Article 5-3 of the rules of procedure.

Of the 300-member parliament, the Election Commission recently published an official gazette containing the names of 213 MP's. The remaining MP's are scheduled to take oath of office on Thursday next. [Word indistinct] and repolling in the rest of the constituencies will be held soon.

Our parliamentary representative says immediately after the oath taking, the MP's belonging to BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] met at the committee room number one with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party at its first meeting today after oath taking ceremony elected BNP chairperson and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia leader of the house unanimously. Former deputy leader of the house, Dr. Badruddoza Chowdhury, was also elected as the deputy leader of the house.

Bangladesh: Awami League Chief—Zia's Address 'Hoodwinked' Nation

BK0403071496 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0200 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The leaders, workers, and supporters of Bangladesh Nationalist Party — BNP — and its front organizations brought out a series of spontaneous processions in the city streets yesterday evening. It hailed Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's address to the nation over radio and television. BNP Secretary General Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder in a press release expressed his deep resentment and protest over bomb attacks on a BNP and Chhatradal [students front of BNP] procession in Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday evening.

The convener and the member secretary of Nationalist Lawyers Forum of Bangladesh in a joint statement welcomed the prime minister's address to the nation yesterday. Doctors Association of Bangladesh in a statement hailed the speech of prime minister and termed it as timely and valuable in view of the country's present political situation.

In her [word indistinct] reaction to the prime minister's address, Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina has alleged that the prime minister has spoken about elections under a nonparty (?neutral) government, but has not pointed out when such election would be held and when she would resign. She said the prime minister's

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address hoodwinked the nation and disappointed the countrymen.

Former deputy leader of the house, Professor H.K.M. Badruddoza Chowdhury, has called upon the opposition political leaders to shun the path of negative politics in the greater interest of democracy, sovereignty, and independence of the country. He gave the call while addressing a discussion in Dhaka yesterday.

Bangladesh: Agreement To Avoid Double Taxation With China Signed

BK0303112896 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0200 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bangladesh and China have signed an agreement to avoid double taxation. According to a handout, measures have been taken in the agreement signed in Dhaka yesterday for avoiding complexities relating to income tax and other allied taxes on income and investment of the nationals of both the countries. The implementation of the agreement will pave the way for increasing Chinese investment in different industrial sectors of Bangladesh.

So far Bangladesh has signed such agreements with 14 other countries, including India, Pakistan, Japan and the UK.

India

India: EU 'Strongly' Favors Including New Delhi in Asia-EU Summits

BK0503132096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The European Union wants India to participate in the next EU [as heard] conference to be held in London in 1998 and also inclusion of India as a full-fledged member of ASEAN. This was stated by the visiting Italian foreign minister, Mrs. Susanna Agnelli, while addressing a press conference in New Delhi. She said India is already a dialogue partner of the ASEAN and therefore it is up to the ASEAN to nominate New Delhi and few other countries for larger representation from Asia to the conference. Strongly favoring India's inclusion in future summits of EU-Asia countries, Mrs. Agnelli said that the Bangkok summit discussed strengthening of political and economic understanding between EU and Asia.

Addressing the conference, the vice president of European Union, Mr. Manuel Marin, said that EU is keen to have a specific cooperation agreement with India to upgrade bilateral relations.

The external affairs minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, told newsmen that the European Union and India have identified areas of cooperation.

India: European Union Team Meets Mukherjee, Rao in New Delhi

BK0503024596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The European Union is keen to have a specific cooperation agreement to upgrade its relations with India. The vice president of the European Commission, Mr. Manuel Marin, said response from the Indian Government is awaited to a draft agreement for such cooperation. He was addressing a joint press conference after the discussions between India and the European Union troika in New Delhi today.

The external affairs minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, said that two sides identified areas of cooperation and decided to jointly work on the issue of reforms in the United Nations. It was also felt that joint action was required in combating the problems of terrorism and drug abuse.

On the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, Mr. Mukherjee said India does not consider it as an end in itself but the treaty should have some linkage with the ultimate objective of total nuclear disarmament.

The troika ministers and the vice president of the European Commission also called on the prime minister. Mr. Narasimha Rao said India will carefully study the decisions taken at the Bangkok summit.

India: Bangladesh Asked To Close Training Camps for Insurgents

BK0403112996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has urged Bangladesh to close down the camps on its soil where insurgents of eastern region are getting training. The union home secretary, Mr. Padamanabhaiah, told newspersons in Agartala that negotiations will continue with Dhaka for the purpose. He along with senior central officials arrived in Agartala yesterday to assess the law and order situation in Tripura. Mr. Padamanabhaiah observed that promulgation of the Disturbed Areas Act will not solve the extremists problem in the state. He stressed the need for increased deployment of state police to put down the menace. Responding to the state government's request, the union home secretary said the center will provide funds, modern weapons and adequate security forces to the state to flush out extremists.

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The situation in the state came up for discussion at a high-level meeting between the central team and the state government. The chief minister, Mr. Dasrath Dev, said the insurgents of Tripura are getting material help from the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] and the NSCN [National Socialist Council of Nagaland] and have sanctuaries in Bangladesh.

India: Alleged Sheltering of Insurgents by Bangladesh Viewed

BK0503064596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Commentary by Bhaskar Roy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The home secretary, Mr. K. Padmanabhaiah, has expressed concern over the training camps for northeast insurgents in Bangladesh. It has once again brought to the fore the disregard in a neighboring country of the global move against the cult of terrorist violence. On a visit to Tripura, Mr. Padmanabhaiah told newspersons that efforts are being made to ensure that the training camps are closed down. Some of the northeastern states have repeatedly pointed to the role being played by the camps in Bangladesh in sustaining the extremist groups, which regularly resort to violence against innocent people. The Assam Government some time back came out with specific details of the shelter provided to the most wanted extremists of the state in Bangladesh. There are serious charges that Pakistan's intelligence agency, ISI [Inter Service Intelligence], is operating in the northeast from its base in Bangladesh.

The (?insurgent) campaign in the northeast is basically an attempt by frustrated elements to subvert the democratic process. The series of gruesome massacres perpetrated by these armed groups in the far-flung areas of the region are a statement of their inability to accept the challenge of democracy. It is also a proof of their alienation from the masses. As a nation adhering to the principles of democracy, Bangladesh should extend all cooperation to her historic ally in wiping out the gun culture from the border areas. Terrorism, as the West has learned, is an evil that does not spare its sustainer also. If the insurgent groups trained and sheltered in Bangladesh ever succeed in their subversive activities, they will certainly encourage similar tendencies of the other side of the border as well.

What the authorities in Dhaka should appreciate is the shifting focus across the developing world from the Cold War obsessions to the challenge of rapid economic growth. The geographical compulsions of Bangladesh are such that she can achieve economic growth only with the cooperation and assistance of India. Instead of allowing its territory to be used for providing succor to the isolated insurgent outfits from the northeast, the nation should draw on India's recent experience in economic reforms and technological resources to implement a program of industrialization.

India: Bhutan King Begins 3-Day State Visit 4 Mar

BK0503024796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] King Jigme Singye Wangchuk of Bhutan arrived in New Delhi today on a three-day state visit to the country. During his stay, he will have talks with the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, and other leaders to further boost India-Bhutanese relations.

India: President, Bhutanese King Discuss Hydroelectric Cooperation

BK0503061596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Bhutan have expressed satisfaction over existing bilateral relations. The president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, and the visiting king of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, discussed the prospects for further intensifying ties in various fields at a meeting in Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] last evening. Both the leaders referred to the ongoing cooperation in the field of hydroelectric power and stressed the need to strengthen it. The meeting was followed by a dinner hosted by Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma in honor of the Bhutanese king.

India: Kashmir Leaders Sent Notices in Wake of Money Scam

BK0403054496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government has issued notices to 43 persons, including some political and religious leaders, in Jammu and Kashmir asking them to furnish details of foreign contributions received in the wake of the hawala [illegal money transfer] scandal. The Home Ministry has issued notices under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 1976. These leaders are to furnish the details of all foreign contributions received by them since 1 January 1990. They have also been asked to clarify if they have sought government permission to accept any foreign hospitality. Syed Ali Shah Gilani of the Jamaat-i-Islami, Mr. Yasin Malik of the JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front], Mr. Abdul Ghani Lone of the People's Conference, Mr. Shabbir Shah of the People's League, Syed Salahuddin of the banned Hizbul Mojahedin, and Mawlavi Abbas Ansari of the Anjuman-i-Ittehad-i-Ulema are among the

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leaders who have been sent the notices. According to the PTI, a spokesman of the All Party Hurriyat Conference, Mr. Firdos Azmi, has confirmed that several of its leaders have received the notices.

India: Bail Granted to Former Minister Implicated in Money Scam

BK0203094996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The designated CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] court today granted bail to former union minister, Mr. Arif Mohammad Khan, charge-sheeted in the hawala [illegal money transfer] case. Mr. Khan appeared in the court personally this morning. The special judge, Mr. V.B. Gupta, asked him to furnish a personal bond of 10,000 rupees and a surety of an equal amount. The judge ordered Mr. Khan not to leave the country without the permission of the court and asked him to surrender his passport to CBI.

Meanwhile, former union ministers Mr. Madhvrao Scindia and Mr. Yashwant Sinha also presented themselves in the designated CBI court to furnish the bail bonds. The special judge, Mr. Gupta, asked them to furnish a personal bond of 5,000 rupees and a surety of an equal amount as per the anticipatory bail order passed by the Delhi high court.

India: U.S. 'Halfhearted' Actions Against Nuclear 'Rogues' Viewed

BK0503122396 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 5 Mar 96

[Commentary by A.J. Phillip, Senior Editor INDIAN EXPRESS]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The hesitation of the U.S. Administration to impose sanctions against Pakistan and China for their clandestine nuclear deals is a telling commentary on the dichotomy that exists between its preaching and practice. It is in this context that the administration's refusal to acknowledge the transfer of nuclear technology that had taken place through a shipment of nuclear related ring magnets from China to Pakistan late last year should be seen. Under the relevant American law, it is mandatory to impose sanctions against nations, which have been found guilty of nuclear proliferation. But such a step can undermine trade and other bilateral relations the U.S. has with the two countries. For instance, the immediate casualty will be the $368 million arms package made available to Pakistan through the Hank Brown Amendment. The amendment was the result of deft maneuvering by the administration, which went out of the way to placate Pakistan despite mounting evidence of its nuclear pursuit and terrorist planks. Obviously, the administration had suppressed vital information about Pakistan's secret nuclear program in its eagerness to supply weapons to that country.

The hollowness of the justifications trotted out for the amendment stands exposed in the light of the confirmation about the Sino-Pakistan nuclear deal given by the director of Central Intelligence Agency — CIA, Mr. John Deutch, a few days ago. It is astounding that in spite of such clear-cut evidence, the U.S. is unwilling to take action against the nuclear rogues. Given the track record of the Chinese, the U.S. could expect swift retaliatory action from them if it imposes sanctions, or withdraws from China the Most Favored Nation status. Needless to say the United States can only ill-afford such a situation, which will have disastrous consequences for its trade relations with that country. In the past also, the United States had shown no compunction in discarding its lofty nonproliferation objective in favor of the trade interests. This is what has compelled the U.S. to find a via media to mollify the public opinion at home while safeguarding its narrow self interests; but in doing so, it has gone to a ludicrous length. For instance, the Clinton administration is reported to have requested China for help in investigating the shipment of ring magnets to Pakistan. It is puerile to expect China to admit on its own that it had violated the rules of the nonproliferation treaty. As is only to be expected, Pakistan has been claiming that the nuclear know-how and equipment, which it had received from China, pertain to a power plant being set up at Chasma under the safeguard norms of the International Atomic Energy Agency. But such explanations are unlikely to carry conviction with those who are aware of its two-decade long nuclear pursuit. More so, when intelligence reports suggest that another shipment of similar equipment from China is almost ready.

This will render the U.S. Administration susceptible to fresh onslaught from the lawmakers who may even be tempted to review the Hank Brown Amendment. It is in its overweening desire to please all that the U.S. has decided to delay transfer of weapons to Pakistan, while asking the U.S. Export-Import Bank to freeze export credits to China for a month. Already, the business community, which is eager to tap a huge potential of China, has criticized the government's interference in the bank's work. Needless to say, these halfhearted measures are too mild to have any deterrent effect on either China or Pakistan. Possibly, these halfhearted measures are part of a deal the U.S. has struck with China. Whatever be the truth, the goings on cannot but cause grave concern to India. As the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, told the joint session

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of parliament, Pakistan's attempt to acquire uranium enrichment technology will heighten tension in the region and trigger an arms race.

India: Article Gives 'Common Sense' View of U.S. Interests

BK0503045396 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 4 Mar 96 p 13

[Article by A.N. Dar: "Common Sense About the United States"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] While a new ambassador must be preparing to take up the Indian diplomacy's most challenging assignment, in the United States, it will be worthwhile for India to assess its mood. This is an important period for both countries — 1996 is their election year. What happens will dictate the turn of events till the end of this century.

We should not have any exaggerated, colourful view of the importance India enjoys abroad, particularly in a country like America. This will help us see India's situation in perspective. The kind of coverage American elections are getting in the Indian media these days is far greater than what American newspapers publish about India. Yet, this should not make India feel small. This is so with most countries. India's difficulties and achievements are hardly of any consequence to America. Nor does it help to dwell on our efforts to strengthen our democracy, secularism and pluralism. India is just one of the countries on the globe.

For one thing, America has too many difficulties of its own to be bothered much about others. It too has a difficult problem of integration, much more difficult than India's. When late last year nearly a million black men gathered in Washington it was an event not many ha[d] [a]mt would take place in the post-Martin Luther [K]ing America. The whites and the blacks are two major [is]sues which divide and unite America. This should [ide]ally make America have great sympathy for India's [ef]forts to hold itself together. If this sympathy was there, America would feel drawn towards India's efforts to strengthen links with Kashmir. But America is too much taken up with itself to be thinking of India's problems.

This is no disparagement of America. Americans are not interested too much in others. They are not interested in the next door neighbour, Canada, except when there is a threat of Quebec going out of the country. France, too, for instance, gets very little attention except to a small extent when Greenpeace tries to thwart its nuclear tests or reports come that the old President Mitterand was carrying on the presidency with prostrate cancer. France goes on merely because it does not depend on America. There seems to be an everlasting interest in China. The country has baffled the United States. It has for years stood up to America. Its system is opposed to American democracy but It is working out an economic pattern that offers many opportunities for the United States. It is amazing to see how China has flooded the United States with toys, from the highly sophisticated electronic ones to simple gadgets. (Indian exports hardly show up in the bazar. You may see an Indian mirror work skirt in a store sometimes, along with some similar items from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Thailand. I went to an Indian house and the children there had hundreds of toys, ninety per cent of them made in China.) There is also interest in Vietnam. This is a country which has defeated the United States but is now inviting it to join in its reconstruction.

Some other countries too evoke American interest. That is because they are steadfastly anti-American — Iran, Libya, Iraq. Pakistan gets better heard than India. It has evolved a formula which says as the former Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, did that India's nuclear plans are a threat to Pakistan and the region, therefore Pakistan's nuclear deterrent should be accepted. This argument is easily put forward and by and large accepted. Americans just don't have the patience to go deep into India's security needs. Pakistan is seen as a loyal friend which has stood by the United States be it in the United Nations or in Afghanistan. India was then seen as having created many problems. It is no consolation for America that this was done by the largest democracy in the world. Pakistan is seen as a country which can channel Muslim fundamentalism into ways which will not challenge America. The United States needs this assurance. Perhaps it is not totally against fundamentalism. It does not want the terror that terrorism spreads but it would not fear it if it creates an Islamic block which will hold Muslim nations together. It does not like fundamentalism as it rules in the Sudan. It does not like the way it is threatening its friends, say, in Egypt. But it is quite happy to find Benazir Bhutto promising to hold back fundamentalism while she wants to keep Pakistan as a strong Muslim state which lives in friendship with the United States.

In this, India is bound to suffer. To the average American mind since Kashmir is a Muslim majority state, Muslim Pakistan's views get readily heard. It has just started feeling alarmed because it has come to know that China is helping Pakistan in its nuclear game. When Mikhail Gorbachev says that if the United States sells arms to Pakistan, it should not be surprised when India responds by testing missiles, it is not seen as an instance of double standards.

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It was India's good fortune when men like Chester Bowles or Kenneth Galbraith came as US ambassadors. They spoke loudly in favour of India and were heard in the United States. But it is India's misfortune when an official who obviously does not like India comes to occupy a position of some authority in the United States. When a supporter of Kashmiri separatists writes to President Clinton protesting against India the State department drafts a reply which would innocuously say that the President was concerned. His office would put a stamp of his signature on it. That is all that happens but with the stamp the reply becomes the US policy. Pakistan would gloat over it and India would feel frustrated and America would be indifferent. No major thinking goes into it; yet, it affects India.

The former President, George Bush, has said: "I wish I were not 71 years old. I wish I was about 32. And upwardly mobile. I would bring what little bucks I had in my pocket and come over and try to make a joint venture with some of the successful people (in India) and then sit back and watch not only myself prosper, but watch India prosper." Yes, this is true. But it could apply to any country, China or Pakistan. Sidhartha Shankar Ray has said that the Americans realise that if we carry on the way we are, by the end of this century "India will become the single largest democratic free market in the world." China's example shows that America would do business with any country, democratic or dictatorial so long as it is fast moving, orderly and short of red tape.

Iran

Iran: Commentary Says Israel Provoking Hamas Attacks

LD0403142196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The military wing of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], issuing a statement on Sunday, March 3rd, announced: Should its demands be met by the Zionist regime, it would halt its martyrly operations against the Zionists for three months. It is to be noted: The Hamas movement, in a retaliatory measure last week and yesterday, carried out two martyrly operations against Zionist positions.

Political observers believe, in case the Zionists are really interested to have Hamas end its operations, they should at least free all the Palestinians in their captivity. In fact, the Zionist regime, by failing to meet this demand and martyring Palestinian combatants, is provoking Palestinian groups to mount retaliatory measures.

Since the first anti-Zionist operations launched by Hamas in Beyt ul-Muqaddas [Jerusalem] last week, the Islamic movement announced that, should the Zionist regime stop its manhunt for its members and set the movement's prisoners free, it would end its armed operations against the Zionists. The Hamas movement is also demanding that the Zionist regime adhere to the Oslo Accord and commitments over Gaza and Jericho and dismantle Jewish settlements in Gaza and the West Bank.

But each time Hamas brings up the establishment of a cease-fire, the Zionist regime, in line with its malicious policies, rejects it. The Zionist regime's rejection of Hamas' proposal of halting its military operations against Israelis indicates the fact that, given its aggressive nature, the Zionist regime intends to continue with its suppressive policy against the oppressed nation of Palestine.

The Zionist regime, in its first move after the two martyrly operations mounted by the Hamas movement last week, suspended its talks with Syria in Maryland, USA. The Zionist regime also threatened not to hold talks with the Palestinians over the final fate of the Palestinian territories.

The Zionist officials' remarks point out the fact that the Zionist regime, under the pretext of Hamas continuing its martyrly operations against the Zionists — which is the direct outcome of the Zionists' performance — is playing for time in holding talks with Arab countries and handing over the least of concessions to the opposite side. Elsewhere, the Zionist regime has announced: In order to impose its domination over Palestinian territory, it will, through different tactics, clear the way for an ethnic separation of the Jews and the Muslims in occupied Palestine by setting up security walls. The Zionist regime also strives to replace Palestinian workers by workers from other countries so as to step up the economic pressure against the Palestinian Muslims.

At any rate, given such policies, we can say that, despite the Zionist regime's claims for peace, domineering policies top the Zionist regime's programs.

Iran: IRNA Sees Israeli Bombings as 'Divine Retribution'

LD0403210396 Tehran IRNA in English 2036 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Mar 4 (IRNA) — The two powerful bomb attacks in occupied Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and in Tel Aviv in two days have stunned and shocked the Israelis, leaving the Zionist state in a grip of fear.

The massive bomb blasts have not only shattered the "Rambo" image of Israeli secret services like Mosad and Shabak, but they herald the beginning of the end

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of Israel. The blasts prove that the Zionist state stands utterly powerless to prevent the attacks by the heroic youth of Islam. Israel, the only state in the world to be created by terrorism and brutal use of force, is now tasting its own medicine.

The divine retribution on those who spread corruption and injustice on the earth will be severe.

Monday's bombing struck the heart of Tel Aviv, killing about 15 people and injuring as many as 70. The explosion is the fourth in 8 days. The latest wave of explosions claimed 60 Israeli lives and hundreds of casualties.

Four decades ago, after occupying Palestine with the support of the West, the Zionist state has been violating all international laws and human norms and trampling the rights of Palestinian people under its feet. The leaders of the illegal Zionist entity, Like Shamir, Begin, Dayan, Rabin, Peres have committed terrorist acts against the Palestinian people with their own hands.

The Zionist state not only continues to occupy Arab lands, but has invaded and bombed Arab states like Lebanon, Iraq and Tunisia, killing hundreds of innocent civilians. The Islamic revolutionaries should pay no heed to the outcry of the hypocritical West which gloats when Muslims are slaughtered and sheds crocodile tears when Israelis are killed.

Muslims are obliged to obey only God's command in the holy Koran to wage jihad against the occupiers of Muslim lands till final victory and liberation

The wave of Hamas bombing attacks also has a clear message to the Arab rulers who have been rushing to put their signatures on treaties of capitulation with the Zionist regime. The message is: "The spirit of jihad is very much alive and Muslims are awake. Enough of the treachery."

Iran: Daily Recommends Tel Aviv Stop State-Sponsored Terrorism

LD0403143596 Tehran IRNA in English 1004 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — The English [language] daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' Monday recommended the Zionist regime to stop state-sponsored terrorism, abide by the U.N. resolutions and restore the rights of the Palestinians. Otherwise, it said, peace will never be restored to the region.

Editorializing on the Sunday bomb explosion in Bayt al-Muqaddas [Jerusalem] for the second consecutive Sunday, killing about 19 persons, the paper blasted the strong reaction shown by the Israeli and Palestinian authority officials.

The paper stressed that a quick look at Tel Aviv's reaction to the recent incident is a clear witness to the stupidity of the Zionist regime's officials in dealing with a nation whose land has been occupied, rights overlooked and youth imprisoned.

The main cause of the problem is the Israeli ruthless treatment of Palestinians and state-sponsored terrorism as well as the unjust terms for peace with Arabs, it said.

"Unfortunately the Israeli officials are terrorists by nature," said the paper adding, "how can we expect peace and fairness from a regime whose highest authority declares that he would destroy houses of the innocent family members of Muslim activists."

Turning to the statement issued by a Hamas faction (calling itself the Yehya Ayash Battalion) that it would refrain from further attacks for the next three months to allow Israel and Hamas reach a cease-fire, it said instead of grasping the opportunity to find practical ways to peace, Shim'on Peres announced a total war against Hamas.

Referring to the terrorist nature of the Zionist regime, the editorial said, "It will be a natural right of Muslims, specially members of Hamas to defend themselves against Israeli state- sponsored terrorism."

The paper concluded by warning, "If Israel continues its expansionist, annexationist policies, peace will never be restored to the region."

Iran: UN Envoy Rejects Israeli Charges of Aiding Palestinians

LD0503072696 Tehran IRNA in English 0623 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations, New York, March 5, IRNA — The permanent mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the U.N. considers statement made to the press by the Israeli representative to the U.N. 'irresponsible' and 'inflammatory' against Iran.

"His allegations that Iran supplies Palestinian groups with financial resources, arms and training facilities are absolutely false and the permanent mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran categorically rejects them," it stressed in a statement issued here Monday evening.

His baseless allegations against Iran is designed to deflect attention from Israeli practices which is the true cause of their problems, it added.

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"Pointing fingers at Iran or other external sources ... merely scape goating and of no avail to them," it concluded.

The Israeli representative to the United Nations in an interview with reporters Monday morning accused the Islamic Republic of Iran of being responsible for support, supply and training of jihad forces in the occupied lands.

Iran: Radio Commentary on Palestine Events, Process of Compromise

LD0403132696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1052 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Repeated explosions in Jerusalem and other occupied territories has darkened the destiny of the process of compromise and has caused anxiety on the part of its designers. Following the recent explosion, the leader of the Zionist regime said the regime is in a state of war and called for increased security measures and suppression of Palestinian groups. [passage omitted]

Taking into account that measures by the Zionist regime to contain Palestinian groups include torture, suppression, kidnapping, and attacks on innocent people at prayer, observers believe an increase in security measures would not only fail to prevent the actions of Palestinian groups, but will also prepare the grounds for their increased operations. Generally speaking, the process of compromise was implemented under the assumption that the formation of a self-rule authority would lead to control over Palestinians. However, the plan, which recognized a minute part of the rights of the Palestinian people which they could exercise only under severe controls, has failed to achieve its desired results.

Since the Palestinians are struggling for the total liberation of the land, they do not see the self-rule authority as the manifestation of their hopes, and so they will not abandon their fight. Therefore, despite coordination between the Zionist regime and 'Arafat's self-rule government, forces opposed to the compromise continue their path, and an increase in repression will only lead to an increase in their operations.

This tendency could show the failure of the process of compromise and could place the groups opposed to the process of compromise in a situation where they are more capable of preventing the progress of the process of compromise.

Iran: Commentary on 'Massive Vacuum' in U.S. Mideast Policy

NC0103150696 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian 26 Feb 96 p 1

[Political commentary: "The Absence of Forces to Propel U.S. Diplomacy in the Middle East"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. government's objections to the visit by Louis Farrakhan, the leader of American Muslims, to some Muslim countries in the Middle East, and his utterances of support for Muslims and the Islamic Revolution—which according to some analysts may or may not be domestically driven—indicates in reality, the presence of a massive vacuum in U.S. foreign policy.

The fact is that, despite its politico-military influence in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East, U.S. foreign policy does not have any real presence or influence in a large portion of the region. In spite of propagandist and military backing, U.S. policy is becoming less effective by the day on events in the Middle East.

It is no mere coincidence that Louis Farrakhan should visit precisely those countries in which there is no U.S. foreign policy apparatus or where it has no clout in national political circles and trends. Farrakhan's trip to Sudan, Libya, Iran, and Iraq, and his remarks defending the people of these countries against aggressive U.S. policies, is in fact a visit to those countries in which the U.S. government has no diplomatic presence.

Farrakhan's meetings with Turkish Muslims and his support for them, as well as his discussions with informal and religious circles in Saudi Arabia, are also the kind of circles in which the United States has no influence or presence.

The fact is that the proliferating and fast-progressing course of the Islamic Revolution in the Middle East has created conditions which have pushed the U.S. foreign policy apparatus into the background. Thus, the United States does not have any diplomatic presence in a large part of the Middle East.

The recent U.S. decision to remove its diplomats from Sudan is not only a reaction to some potential threats, but also indicates that U.S. forces in the Middle East are being considerably reduced. In about half of the Middle East countries, there are no U.S. diplomatic representations and no embassies—Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and recently Sudan have joined this list.

In addition, American diplomats in Algiers, Beirut, and Cairo live in fortified bastions and American citizens have been advised not to visit Lebanon. In their visits to Egypt, the autonomous Palestinian areas, and Saudi

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Arabia, they have been asked to take precautionary measures. In conjunction with this decimated presence, U.S. influence has also been largely eroded in the political processes of the Middle East and this resulted in the U.S. information apparati's failure to predict and guide events in the region.

Iran: Larijani Deplores 'Lawless Behavior' of U.S. Politicians

LD0303203296 Tehran IRNA in English 2008 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 3, IRNA — Cuban Ambassador to Tehran, Enrique Trujillo Rapallo, on Sunday held talks with Vice-Chairman of Majles Foreign Policy Commission, Mohammad Javad Larijani on bilateral relations.

He briefed Larijani on the U.S. provocations against Cuba and delivered him a message from his government.

Larijani deplored the lawless behaviour of U.S. politicians, saying that such moves have seriously put international peace and security in jeopardy.

He said, unfortunately, despite the opposition of world nations to such behaviour, the self-imposed attitude of American policy-makers is still creating problems.

Larijani held the United Nations responsible for U.S. lawlessness and added that Iranian nation, parliament and government condemn any form of aggression against the sovereignty of other nations.

He said the Cuban people have paid a heavy price for their independence and today they have one of the most independent governments in the region.

Larijani called on the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to seriously study the question of U.S. interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

During the meeting, the Cuban ambassador extended an invitation to Larijani from the Cuban Parliament's Foreign Policy Commission to visit Cuba.

Iran: Daily Criticizes U.S. 'Violation' of Cuban Sovereignty

LD0203103896 Tehran IRNA in English 0947 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 2, IRNA — A morning daily Saturday commented on the recent violation of Cuban air space by a U.S. plane, saying the incident was another example of Washington-sponsored activities aimed at destabilizing a sovereign independent state.

The recent decision of the U.S. to tighten economic sanctions on Cuba is a violation of international law and the by-laws of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the English-language TEHRAN TIMES underlined in its editorial.

"In the face of its inability to impose its will on third world countries, the U.S. tries to rely on the threat of sanctions to make these countries kowtow. Washington's decision to apply sanctions to third world countries, as in the case of Haiti, has already come under fire from U.S. partners and allies," it stressed.

As to the response of Havana to American violation of its air space, it noted that the Cuban Government has warned that it will counter such incidents strongly.

"The lesson the U.S. has learned comes too late. There are no tests to be conducted in troubled waters without disastrous consequences," the paper wrote.

If Washington has not learned a lesson from the latest incident, when will it ever learn, it asked, saying the message that Cuba sent was very clear.

The humiliation of being rebuffed by Canada and Europe should, hopefully, make the U.S. abandon more future state-sponsored terrorism, TEHRAN TIMES concluded.

Iran: Commentary—EU To Increase Ties Despite U.S. 'Bullying'

LD0103144196 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 28 Feb 96 p 2

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rita Sussmuth, speaker of the German Bundestag, announced on 26 February that Germany has rejected the U.S. request that her country sever ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The announcement, made on the same day when visiting French Housing and Transport Minister, Bernard Pons, and his Iranian counterpart, Akbar Torkan, announced their countries' mutual desire to improve relations, is significant.

The two countries are the most influential members of the European Union [EU], which is set to play a crucial role in the forces that will rule the emerging world order.

Political analysts agree that the European Union is one end of the economic pole in the new world order. Events that have unfolded indicate that, since the collapse of the bipolar world order, nations are leaning toward alignments predominantly of an economic nature. Considerations of an economic nature now predominate in shaping policies in the new world order which, in turn, will turn out new actors in the community of nations.

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The EU, in general, and Germany and France, in particular, are bound to assume a more serious, independent role in the alignment of forces internationally.

It would not be arrogant to say that the two countries' desire to improve relations with Iran has its justification in extrinsic and intrinsic values they see in the country. The extrinsic value may be found in Iran's strategic location at the junction of the Persian Gulf and Central Asia. The intrinsic value is in Iran's proven stability, military might, abundance of natural resources, big market, etc.

Indeed, the feeling of dependence is mutual and naturally draws both sides to each other. The EU, which is itself against any U.S. bullying in its sources of raw materials, should logically resist the same bullying in the strategic region of the Persian Gulf, which is the source of the world's most important raw material — oil. It should join hands with Iran in making sure U.S. selfish interests in the region do not have an upperhand.

Although differences between the EU and the United States have not become fully magnified to create serious problems to date, the time will definitely come for which the EU must now be prepared.

Instead of increasing animosity in its relations with other countries, the United States will do better to respect the wishes of other nations to be left alone. It is not the world's policeman to protect a unipolar world, as U.S. statesmen envisaged after the collapse of the bipolar world order, but one of the actors in a global play.

Iran: Bosnian Envoy Denies Bosnian Troops Being Trained in Iran

LD0503063296 Tehran IRNA in English 0559 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA — Bosnian Ambassador to Tehran Omar Bahman, in an interview with the English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' printed Tuesday, refuted claims that Bosnian troops are being trained in Iran.

"To my knowledge there are no Bosnian troops in Iran," he said, adding that there is no proof whatsoever to support this contention."

The French news agency, AFP, quoted the NEW YORK TIMES on Monday as saying that the Bosnian Government has sent troops to the Islamic Republic for training in a bid to upgrade its military capability.

Meanwhile, TEHRAN TIMES also reported that an informed source at the Iranian Foreign Ministry has strongly rejected the report as being baseless and unfounded.

Stating that this false propaganda spread by the U.S. is aimed at weakening Iran's humanitarian aid to Bosnia, he stressed that the Islamic Republic has no military cooperation with the Bosnians.

Iran: Afghan President Ends Tehran Visit

LD0403174096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Afghan president [Borhanoddin Rabbani] today concluded his Tehran visit after holding two rounds of talks with our country's authorities. Our correspondent reports.

[Correspondent] Concluding his official visit to our country, the Afghan president emphasized the importance of continuation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's efforts aimed at resolving the current crisis in his country. He expressed appreciation of the special attention paid by the great leader of the Islamic revolution, the president, and government of Iran to the problems and difficulties facing the Afghan people.

[Begin recording] [Rabbani] Very important and effective steps have been taken under this sensitive condition where our country, Afghanistan, is facing a series of difficulties — due to foreign conspiracies that are aimed at destroying the Islamic Government and defaming Mojahedin — and in the reconciliation process among and removing tensions between the warring factions [sentence as heard]

[President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Our main concern is Afghanistan's civil war. We have for sometime embarked on extensive efforts to end these conflicts and revive coordination among the warring groups in Afghanistan. The Afghan Government will be able to take charge of the country's reconstruction and running of the country.

The measures that we have taken in the past few months have been successful to a decree. This visit gives us an opportunity to discuss the further progress of our achievements. We also discussed the future of Afghanistan and how to implement the reconstruction process after the establishment of security. We have in general achieved good results from our talks and God willing, you will see the effects of these talks in Afghanistan's situation. [end recording]

Iran: Afghan President Visits Mashhad on Way Home

LD0403221996 Tehran IRNA in English 2202 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mashhad, Khorasan Prov., March 4, IRNA — President of Afghanistan Borhanod-

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din Rabbani and his delegation on Monday [4 March] arrived in Mashhad on their return trip home and were greeted by local officials here.

The Afghan president was also received by Va'ez Tabassi, the superintendent of the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS [peace be upon him]), the eighth imam in the order of the rightful successors to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH [peace be upon him]).

The president of Afghanistan told Tabassi that the enemies of Islam had tried to misportray the jihad of the people of Afghanistan, and thereby prevent the full establishment of an Islamic government in that country.

He said the people of Afghanistan had covenanted to drop even the last drop of their blood for giving Islam the stature that it truly deserves.

Rabbani also appreciated the help of the Islamic Republic of Iran for reconciling various groups in Afghanistan towards full peace.

Iran: Velayati Trip to Baku Seen as Effort To Safeguard Ties

LD0203123496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1103 GMT 2 Mar 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Continuing his visits to a number of CIS countries, Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati left the Kazakh capital Almaty today for Baku.

The visit by the foreign minister and his delegation is aimed at submitting an official message from the Iranian president and also holding talks with Azeri officials on ways of expanding bilateral ties and cooperation in the region, especially in relation to the Karabakh conflict. The visit has provided a good opportunity for the two countries once again to evaluate their relations from all angles. [passage omitted]

During the visit by Dr. Velayati, the Karabakh issue will be discussed. As in the past, the Islamic Republic of Iran is again ready to start fresh efforts to end the Karabakh conflict through mediation.

It now seems that after many turbulent years, Azerbaijan has achieved relative calm and stability, and thanks to the friendship and fraternity between the peoples of Iran and Azerbaijan — a bond which is rooted in their common history, religion, and heritage, and therefore cannot be limited by formal borders and boundaries — many of the problems have now been solved and the way has been paved for even greater closeness between the two countries.

Relations between Iran and Azerbaijan are rooted in their long common history, in which Islam has always acted as a uniting factor for all ethnic groups. This unity is so strong and firm that efforts to mar and undermine the fraternal ties that exist between the people of the two countries are certainly doomed to failure.

The Muslim nations of Iran and Azerbaijan enjoy long-standing bonds which are still strong and firm, and will remain so even in the distant future.

The short visit of our country's foreign minister to Baku is in line with efforts aimed at safeguarding and strengthening these bonds, and at the same time reiterating the need to confront certain trends which emanate either from inside or outside Azerbaijan and seek to damage relations between the two countries.

Iran: Velayati Ends Visit to Ukraine, Leaves for Yerevan

LD0503105996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our country's foreign minister concluded his talks with Ukrainian officials and left for Yerevan, capital of Armenia, this morning.

At the meetings between 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his accompanying delegation and Ukrainian officials, the expansion of bilateral and regional ties were discussed and it was agreed that the first session of the joint economic commission of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ukraine will be held early next year [Iranian year starts 20 March 1996] in Tehran.

Iran: Deal with Ukraine, Turkmenistan Questioned

NC0203194096 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 24 Feb 96 p 4

[Commentary by Dr. Habib Chini: "A New Meaning for Group Cooperation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We had a report that Iran is to repay Ukraine's debts to Turkmenistan and will import steel from Turkmenistan in return. Apparently this tripartite transaction is taking place as part of the agreement on group cooperation that was recently signed by the three countries. But frankly speaking, this form of cooperation surprises us. What will we gain from all this apart from playing the role of a middleman? Ukraine owes Turkmenistan and cannot repay its debt. In other words, it doesn't have any money. If our foreign exchange situation were so good and we could just hand over money to Ukraine as a gift or extend a loan or credit to it in return for a reasonable profit, this would be a financial transaction similar to thousands of others

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that take place on a daily basis. And even if it didn't yield a reasonable profit, we could say that this was a type of long-term investment for finding friends. But we know that we have $23 billion in foreign debts and that after years of hardship and haggling over an extension of the repayment period, our own foreign debts were delayed and we got some credits with great difficulty and with strong opposition from America in order to repay our own debts. Therefore, currently we are not in a position to be able to extend a loan or credit to anyone.

Meanwhile, we also need imported steel to compensate for our low domestic production. But this steel should meet international standards so that it can meet complicated technical demands, or else it will be unusable. The price of this type of steel is repeatedly stated in the stock market exchange. But we should pay cash to buy this kind of steel. If we buy the steel from neighboring Turkmenistan, it will be better for both countries because it will mean lower transportation costs, from which both sides will benefit, and a shorter delivery period. From then on, Turkmenistan will know what to do with the money it receives from the sale of its steel to Iran and whether its priorities will be to repay its debts or to meet its people's needs better. What will we gain by telling Turkmenistan: We will pay cash to buy steel from you and then will repay your debt to Ukraine?

If this deal is made, only Ukraine will benefit. Do you consider this multilateral cooperation? Multilateral cooperation means each side benefits from immediate or future profits. The economy today considers future profits only when it sees that the country it is dealing with enjoys political and economic stability, observes international commitments, and can repay its foreign debts. What foreseeable profit will we be gaining in this transaction? Are we doing this only to receive a thank you from the other side?

A look at our foreign trade balance with the newly-established countries in the former Soviet Union shows that in the long run our trade balance with almost all of these countries has been in the red and that the volume of our trade with them has been very low. But countries like Saudi Arabia and Turkey are rapidly increasing their trade with these countries, which should actually be Iran's natural markets. Therefore, it is better for us to shift from sentimental trade to logical trade and do what the Germans are doing. They have set one foot ahead of the British, who are known as born merchants. They also extend long-term credits. But everything is done on the basis of correct accounting and calculation.

The incidents of the past few years, the inopportune loans to those who took millions of tonnes of oil from us for free under the guise of friendship and are now resorting to outrageous compromises with the sworn enemies of the Muslims is enough to bring us to our senses and to draw a line between trade and other transactions and to very bluntly say that friendship is one thing and trade is another. Moreover, the time has come for us to stop getting involved in things that will have neither immediate nor future profits for us.

What remains now is to see how to make this possible transaction beneficial for all three countries, which will also be able to continue to expand their fruitful cooperation in the future. Ukraine's benefits are obvious since it will be getting what it wants and will be strengthened in order to purchase other items it needs. Iran, which will actually be furnishing the purchasing power for this, should receive a profit from Ukraine and it is better for this to be in cash. For example, Iran can repay Ukraine's debts to Turkmenistan in the form of an extension of credits for the purchase of goods from Iran, naturally on a gradual basis. In this way Ukraine will be able to get what it needs from Turkmenistan and Iran will be able to sell more goods to Ukraine and to expand its trade with that country. Meanwhile, Iran hold be able to get a special discount for the steel it will purchase from Turkmenistan in view of the acute conditions the latter is facing, since all the facts show that Turkmenistan is unable to easily sell its steel on world markets, which are facing relative stagnation. Also, the nearness and the cheap transportation could be beneficial for both Iran and Turkmenistan. In this way, all three countries would benefit significantly from this trade.

Needless to say, if the benefits of all three sides are not ensured, no transaction should occur. In each transaction, a mechanism should be found so that the benefits of all the sides involved will be ensured and so that each side will be able to make a profit. The time when one side's benefit was merely considered the other side's loss has long passed, and world trade is now based on mutual benefit. And if some people lose in the process, the reason should be sought in the way they operated and the methods they used.

Iran: SALAM Column Reflects Economic, Social Problems

WA0103212496 FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE MEDIA NOTE

[FBIS Report]

1996 Series, Number 1

The Tehran daily SALAM carries a regular column, "Hello, SALAM," based on telephoned-in complaints

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and remarks by ordinary Iranian citizens. The following series of dialogues between callers and the paper are excerpted from December editions. These particular complaints deal with U.S. policy vis-a-vis Persian Gulf countries; the disputed Persian Gulf Islands; the Majles elections; former Majles Speaker Mehdi Karrubi; government loans from banks; the influence exerted by the Voice and Vision; former Minister of Heavy Industries Behzad Nabavi; and bribery.

On Persian Gulf Oil, U.S. Presence, Sheikhdoms:

[Caller] Did the small Persian Gulf sheikhdoms dare to act this way toward Iran during the reign of the shah, too? Why don't we give a decisive answer to the UAE's nonsense? Are we really afraid?

[SALAM] At that time, the shah was completely compliant to the wishes of the United States and the White House regarding this region. The Persian Gulf sheikhs did not dare raise a finger. Today, however, it is the Great Satan that is speaking through the mouths of the sheikhdoms, creating conditions that would justify more and more U.S. presence in the region. By dominating the oil fields of the region, the United States would gain a powerful lever to pressure the industrial countries who need this region's oil. By showing the situation to be menacing, the United States is able to sell its arms to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other sheikhdoms and take the oil away with no problem, resolving its economic and other problems as well as the problem of stagnation of its military industry. At the proper time, it will create the need for another war. Through these wars, the United States will get over its own internal crises. But what will be the lot of the entangled countries? Bloodshed and devastation will take root. Thus, it is not the emirates who are standing tall before Iran; it is the United States. And, the question is not the Iranian islands, it is oil, the U.S. presence, the final resolution of the problem of the tyrant Zionist regime, the suppression of the Islamic and freedom-seeking movements of the region, and the defense of the reactionary regimes against independent and revolutionary governments. As for the question as to whether "we are afraid," what would a nation that has put eight years of sacred defense behind it, be afraid of? [14 December 95]

On the Disputed Persian Gulf Islands:

[Caller] The title of an article on 18 December, page 3 reads: "British Foreign Office documents establish Iran's ownership of the Strait of Hormuz Islands." I wanted to know, does not our own Foreign Ministry possess any document showing ownership? Why do we have to rely on the British Foreign Office?

[SALAM] Our Ministry of Foreign Affairs has many documents showing proof of ownership which it has made public. However, the article was based on research done by examining the British Foreign Office documents. The point was that even documents in the possession of others who are our foes show Iranian ownership. [28 December 1995]

On Majles Representatives:

[Caller] You encourage people to participate actively in elections and to form political parties. It is our religious and spiritual duty, as Muslims and Iranians, to participate in the elections. But, could the true representatives of the people find a way to the Majles under the current circumstances known to everyone, with all the screening that is done to establish candidates' qualifications? Certainly not! Those representatives will find a way to the Majles who are approved by the current government, that is, the representatives of the Fourth Majles.

[SALAM] We, contrary to this esteemed reader, believe that if people were to actively participate in the elections and those who are qualified and capable were to register, certainly the true representatives of the people would be elected to the Majles. [14 December 1995]

[Caller] You advise people's active participation in the elections. You encourage all qualified individuals to register. Were not the majority of Imam's [Khomeyni] friends who had been elected to the first three terms of the Majles by majority vote stripped of their qualifications by the Council of Guardians without any reason? Were not even the remaining ones accused of sedition? Don't you remember that a few days before the elections and even on election day, the Voice and Vision [Iran's Radio and Television] which is paid for by the people, asked the public not to vote for the seditious ones? When the Imam's companions are called seditious, God help the rest.

[SALAM] We have said before and we'll say again that no matter what has happened in the past or might still be continuing, this revolution, this system, and this country belong to all of the people who live in it. It does not belong to a particular group. We cannot turn away from our country and revolution because a group has behaved badly. All those on the fringes, even more than in the past, have to come to the arena as the true claimants of the revolution and the system. We repeat again that all qualified people should register. Those groups who want to dominate will attain their goals more easily with fewer rivals. The less participation, the more we have to worry about the future. Everyone is responsible. [18 December 1995]

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[Caller] Has anyone ever looked into what the representatives possessed before being elected to the Majles and what they came to possess when they were there? Have they maintained the same standard of living? Do they live the same as the deprived for whom they supposedly speak? [24 December 1995]

On Interviewing Mehdi Karrubi:

[Caller] We were glad to see the interview with Mr. Karrubi. But it would be better, instead of giving guidance to the people, to also give out the names of some candidates for people to elect.

[SALAM] Our apologies to this reader. If this is not possible for Mr. Karrubi, why should he refrain from doing what is possible, that is, encouragement to participate in the elections. [19 December 1995]

[Caller] What is Mr. Karrubi's position entitling him to suggest that certain people not present themselves as candidates in the next elections?

[SALAM] Usually, speakers are not in the position to give such directives. As seminarians say, these directives and instructions are guidance, not orders. [19 December 1995]

On Loans From Bank Markazi:

[Caller] Even students know that the government borrows from the Bank Markazi (Central Bank). Knowing that, it is a pity that the representatives of the people in the Majles do not utter a word about it. Could it be that they are the government's representatives instead of the people's?

[SALAM] Since 1993, government borrowing has been minimal in the government budget. The government has to make use of banking resources to guarantee the budget of the governmental companies and organizations. However, loans from Bank Markazi should not be proscribed entirely. It depends what the loan is going to be used for. It has to be examined. If the Majles representatives do not have any objections to it, it is because it does not appear to present any problem. The representatives not opposing the loan is not an indication that they are on the government's side. [23 December 1995]

On the High Cost of Living:

[Caller] I am a low-level employee. A few days ago, I went to a store and asked the price of some chocolates. The storekeeper told me in an insolent way that these chocolates were not for me. I asked why? He said because they are expensive. I told him, is this any way to challenge people so they will go ahead and buy your goods? He said, no. I finally bought two imported chocolate bars with the money that I had set aside to buy ten eggs [note: Because of the high prices of eggs, they are currently sold singly rather than by cartons] so that I would save face and not be humiliated with such ease by an illiterate grocer. [24 December 1995]

[Caller] Who is controlling the prices? Potatoes sell for 130 to 150 tumans per kilo and red meat for 1,500 tumans per kilo. Who is responsible for these prices? [26 December 1995]

[Caller] Today, 18 December, SALAM published the picture of a woman who had taken off her shoes to sell them. I wanted you to ask the deputies of the Fourth Majles whether they have seen this picture? This woman was selling her shoes due to extreme poverty. Is this the meaning of coming to the aid of the oppressed? With what hope should we participate in the elections of the Fifth Majles?

[SALAM] With the hope to change this situation. [27 December 1995]

[Caller] Regarding punishments prescribed by law, I wanted to ask the president and other officials whether soft drinks and cocoa are more essential for people or eggs and potatoes? How is it that the former have fixed prices and the latter do not?

[SALAM] You are right that people are at their wit's end when it comes to eggs and potatoes. Their prices have gone up manyfold in these last few months. And, they are basic foods, especially for the poor. [28 December 1995]

On Embezzlement of Funds:

[Caller] The sum of 123 billion embezzled tumans is so large that it is difficult to envision it. If the '91-'92 budget figures are available, please make a comparison between the budget and the 123 billion embezzled figure.

[SALAM] The budget for '91-'92 was 693 billion tumans. The embezzled amount is one-sixth of it. But the truth is that this figure of 123 billion was not at the disposal of the embezzlers all at once. The circulation of the embezzled money in over a year added up to more than this. Although precise figures have not been estimated, it is possible that the total embezzled amount is 2 to 3 billion tumans and at the end added up to a shortage of 6.5 billion. The figure of 123 is the total of the exchanged sum. [24 December 1995]

On Voice and Vision and Elections:

[Caller] The Voice and Vision [Iranian Radio and Television] did not refrain from helping one wing in order to suppress the other through advertisements. There is no danger from that wing anymore but the

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Voice and Vision has not abandoned its habit of promoting some individuals through advertisements in the provinces as well as in Tehran. If they ran promotions once a week for certain people in the previous Majles, now they do it every single day. [25 December 1995]

[Caller] What are those who want to vote for someone other than the individuals whose qualifications have been approved by the Council of Guardians supposed to do?

[SALAM] We have to vote for candidates who have been pronounced qualified. If you object to the decisions of the Council of Guardians, should you find their decisions wrong, you have to find a legal way of objecting to them. [26 December 1995]

[Caller] As you know, the communists have regained power in Russia and Poland. Mr. Yazdi [Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, head of the Judiciary Branch] said in his talk that he does not consider a popular vote as validation for governing. Please tell him that we have enough enemies. Don't turn people into enemies of Islam with these words. [27 December 1995]

[Caller] Ayatollah Yazdi in his Friday sermon prayer talked very politely about the lack of importance of the people's vote. You should be advised to stop encouraging so strongly the people's participation in the elections. [27 December 1995]

On Former Minister Behzad Nabavi

[Caller] I saw this morning Mr. Behzad Nabavi [former minister of heavy industries; also for a time adviser to former Minister of Culture and Guidance Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Khatami] in a beige Hillman [one of the least expensive cars, assembled in Iran]. I was very pleased. I realized that after 10 or 12 years as minister, he still has maintained his humility. By the way, 2 or 3 years ago, he wrote a letter to the president, which was published in the newspapers. Did he ever receive an answer from the president? Will he declare himself to be a candidate?

[SALAM] It is obvious that someone who uses such a vehicle is not qualified for candidacy of the Majles! His qualifications were rejected for the Fourth Majles. [30 December 1995]

On Bribery:

[Caller] We returned from Kish [Iranian island in the Persian Gulf] to Tehran on a SAHA airplane. As the price of tickets rises, the quality of service falls. In the airport, one lady told me to put a 5,000-tuman bill in between some papers if I wanted her to exempt my excess baggage from duty. Shouldn't there be an inspector at these locations? [30 December 1995]

Iran: Press Looks at Political Factions

WA2802025396 FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE MEDIA NOTE

[FBIS Report] As the Iranian public faces fast-approaching elections of the Majles to be held on 8 March 1996, two Tehran papers review the speculations, predictions, and confusion among the populace regarding the ideologies of various political factions.

The Tehran daily newspaper IRAN NEWS, in its satirical column "Tete-A-Tete," expresses the confusion that exists over the ideologies and leanings of various factions in this Majles pre-election environment.

"New Electional Glossary!" (I)

"Master, as we approach the Majles election day, I often encounter political labels in the Iranian press I never knew before. I don't honestly recognize what groups or groupings they represent. They'reawfully confusing.'

"Well, tell me, what are these labels?"

"I've actually made a list of them. The Traditional, Right Wing, The Industrial Right, The Extreme Right, The Technocrats, The Modernists, The 16-Man Group, The Presidency Faction, The Servants of Construction, The Functionaries of the System, The Left Wing, The Leftist Forces, The Imam-Line Groups and a few others. You see, sir, after many years of trying very hard, I only recently managed to make a sort of distinction between the two important groupings — "the Association of the Militant Clergy" and "the Association of the Militant Clerics," — of which the former beat the latter in the previous elections and came to be known, by the latter, as the "ruling wing"! Oh, please explain, master, I'm so pitiably preplexed."

"My dear young man, I'm sorry to disappoint you, because I don't know myself what these labels represent. You see, in my unsophisticated Muslim mind, I always thought that we were a nation of revolutionary Muslims watching the truthful lips of our Supreme Leader in order not to deviate from the Straight Path, either to the left or to the right. I'm sorry, honestly."

"Brief Look at Some of the Spectra" (2)

And the bi-weekly organ of the Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution, 'ASR-EMA "attempts" to define the positions, commonalities, and differences among the various factions in a ten-part series, entitled: "A Brief Look at Some of the Spectra." This FBIS Report

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presents salient excerpts from one issue regarding the Traditional Right Faction, as defined by 'ASR-E MA.

According to 'ASR-E MA, one of the stumbling blocks in defining the factions has been lack of specific positions and written organizational identities in this non-party society. The paper further asserts that their "labeling" is more or less "arbitrary," and is based on statements and political actions of individuals affiliated with various groups. 'ASR-E MA goes on to say that what is important is correctly explaining the viewpoints of each faction and maintaining honesty.

With the above caveat in place,'ASR-E MA catagorizes the existing political and ideological factions into four groups:

1. The "Traditional Right," which is the same as the old "Right."

2. The "Left," which also has not changed.

3. The "Modern Right" is a new faction that has arisen mostly from among the traditional right" and the "left."

4. The "New Left," is a new faction that is composed of those who do not fit in the 'old right' or the 'old left' factions.

In the first group the adjective "traditional" distinguishes it from the new modern "right" faction, formed in recent years, and also to indicates its traditional viewpoint. The foreign media and others used to call this group 'moderate.' However, with the appearance of new groups and their ideological differences, the foreign media now calls it "conservative."

According to 'ASR-E MA, the "Traditional Right" faction embodies some of the following charateristics and ideologies:

— is the most fundamentalist of the Islamic Hezbollah groups and bases all its ideological, and economic positions and viewpoints on the Koran. It considers the Islamic government adivine and heavenly phenomenon and sees the role of the general public merely as agents in the service of the Islamic ruler, while the elite plays a counseling role. As a rule, it regards the relationship of the Islamic government to the people as a unilateral one, from above to below.

— the Constitution is explicit about political and social freedoms, such as freedom of expression, the press, parties, and elections. The 'Traditional Right' pretends to respect these freedoms. However, its past and present actions demonstrate that it does not strongly believe in them.

When the formation of a party, the election of an individual, or the publication of a journal is determined by the Traditional Right to be 'to the detriment of Islam and Muslims,' it grants permission to its members and supporters to violate freedoms by 'acting in accordance to ones religious duty.'

— believes in an 'Islamic economy' which, ideologically, follows religious law. With this perspective, issues such as cooperatives, banks, insurance, taxes, and customs duties, which are not mentioned in religious jurisprudence, are rejected. The 'Traditional Right' advocates a 'closed economy,' which to a degree consumes only what the country is able to produce. In this scenario, the traditional merchants and the bazaaries play the main role.

— considers any involvement of the government in the economy an un-Islamic act. Based on such thinking, even oil belongs to the owners of the land on which the wells are located, and the government has no right to oil revenues. For this reason, it has opposed the nationalization of banks, insurance companies, and economic establishments. It also considers some of the articles of the Constitution dealing with the economy to be non-Islamic, including Articles 43 and 44, because they emphasize 'deconcentration of wealth in the hands of a particular stratum' and ownership by the government and cooperative sector.

Hence, the economic system advocated by the 'traditional right,' does not have a comparable model in today's progressive economies and it will not survive. Media Sources

1 IRAN NEWS in English 30 Jan 96 p 3 by Abu Sina
2 'Asr-e Ma in Persian 11 Jan 95 pp 3, 7

Pakistan

Pakistan: Prime Minister Departs for Brunei, Indonesia

BK0503034096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has gone to Brunei Darussalam, where she will begin a two-day official visit today. She will also pay a three-day visit to Indonesia starting Thursday. During her five-day trip, she will exchange views with the leaders of the two countries on a number of issues, especially investment opportunities in Pakistan. She will apprise the leaders of these countries of the security situation in South Asia, with particular reference to the current situation in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Issues such as India's Prithvi missile test and its alleged preparations for another nuclear test will also be discussed during the talks.

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In a statement before her departure, the prime minister said she is hopeful of holding fruitful discussions with the leaders of Brunei Darussalam and Indonesia on bilateral issues and matters of mutual interest. The prime minister said Brunei is replete with a wealth of oil and gas and is among the countries in the world with the highest per capita foreign exchange reserves. It is a member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Nonaligned Movement, and the Commonwealth. Indonesia is the largest country in the region and the largest Islamic country in the world. Its economy is very vibrant and stable. She said that during her talks with the leaders and representatives of industries and commerce of the two countries, she will apprise them of the recent reforms to liberate the economy from unnecessary restrictions in order to attract more investment and promote trade. She said special attention will be paid to acquiring assistance for the improvement of the country's infrastructure.

Benazir Bhutto said the leaders of these countries will be apprised of Pakistan's concern over the situation in the South Asian subcontinent as well as the crisis in Afghanistan. The situation in other regions will also be reviewed and efforts will be made to muster cooperation to realize common objectives and ensure peace and stability in Asia.

The prime minister is accompanied by federal ministers Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, Aftab Shaban Mirani, Chaudhary Ahmad Mukhtar, and Anwar Saifullah Khan; Privatization Commission Chairman Syed Navid Qamar; and Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao, chief minister of the Northwest Frontier Province.

Pakistan: Editorial Views U.S. Envoy's Remarks on Nuclear Transfer

BK0403094796 Islamabad PAKISTAN in Urdu 3 Mar 96 p 10

[Editorial: "What Else Does the United States Want?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Thomas W. Simons' statement that "if Pakistan does not want to be friends with the United States, then we do not need Pakistan's friendship," Foreign minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said he does not believe the ambassador actually said this. The foreign minister said Simons is a fine diplomat who issues responsible statements, and that either his statement was misunderstood or he was misquoted. Sardar Asif added that Pakistan has been trying to improve relations with the United States for the past two and a half years and would not allow any misunderstanding to spoil these efforts.

The U.S. ambassador explained the positive aspects of the Brown Amendment at a ceremony to announce investment in a 140 megawatt power plant being built by Habibullah Coastal Power Company in Quetta. He said "the amendment will open a new chapter of relations between the two countries." Simons added that if Pakistan's Government feels that this is insufficient, then the United States would reply by telling Pakistan to look for other friends. The United States wants to maintain its friendship with Pakistan; however if Pakistan does not want to maintain its friendship with the United States, then the United States does not want to maintain its friendship with Pakistan. The Brown Amendment will pave the way for repayment of the money paid for the F-16's by selling these airplanes to a third country. It has succeeded in relaxing the repayment restriction of the 1 billion dollars to Pakistan. This amount was being withheld due to the Pressler Amendment.

The U.S. ambassador's statement has been reported in the press, not only by newspapers, but by various news agencies as well. The foreign minister has been very generous by giving the U.S. ambassador the benefit of doubt. The foreign minister has shown much more diplomatic insight and sensibility than the U.S. ambassador has. It is said that "diplomats think twice even before saying nothing," meaning even their silence is based on wisdom. U.S. Ambassador Thomas W. Simons spent his childhood in Pakistan. He is well aware of its traditions and is deeply interested in its affairs. His appointment in Pakistan was warmly welcomed, but it was also hoped that during his term as ambassador friendly relations between Pakistan and United States could be further strengthened. The bitterness caused by the Pressler Amendment will soon be replaced by amity and reconciliation, but his above mentioned statement does not fulfill the expectations associated with him.

The attempt that the foreign minister has made to save him from the consequences of such a statement should be appreciated, not only by the ambassador, but also by the Clinton administration. They should honor Pakistan's efforts to improve relations with the United States. The foreign minister has said in very clear terms that we need the friendship of the United States, and that we have been striving toward that for the past two and a half years. Why should we be ashamed in expressing our desire to be friends with the United States? The position enjoyed by the United Sates as the only superpower does not need an explanation. European and Asian countries are trying to strengthen trade and economic relations and increase cooperation with each other in various fields. The recent meeting of the leaders of the European

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Community and ASEAN countries is clear evidence of this. If Pakistan tries to establish close and friendly relations with European, Asian, Central Asian, Middle Eastern and Far Eastern countries, no one should be surprised by it.

The foreign minister has said that Pakistan is a peace-loving country, that it supports the establishment of durable peace at the regional and world level and is ready to play a role for this purpose. Pakistan does not want to conduct a nuclear explosion, but it is being pushed in this direction by India. India has readied Prithvi and Agni missiles, India has increased its defense budget by ten percent, yet no one questions its activities. On the contrary, Pakistan is advised not to participate in the arms race. How can Pakistan overlook its own defense requirements? It has every right to stop foreign aggression. It can safeguard its independence and sovereignty only by defeating India's aggressive plans. The foreign minister said that the United States has not demanded a verbal or written explanation regarding the supply of nuclear technology from China. What has been reported in the newspapers has nothing to do with the U.S. Administration. Pakistan and China have explained to the U.S. Administration that there has been no transfer of nuclear material for preparing weapons. The equipment and material for the Chashma nuclear power plant has been supplied. This plant comes under international safeguards and can be inspected. After the foreign minister's explanation, there is no justification for any comments or suspicions about the transfer of nuclear technology to Pakistan.

Pakistan: Editorial Views Clinton's 'Reprieve' on Narcotics Issue

BK0403122796 Karachi DAWN in English 3 Mar 96 p 7

[Editorial: "Not a Clean Bill of Health"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The grant of reprieve to Pakistan by the U.S. president on Friday has cleared the way for the continuation of American assistance to Islamabad for narcotics control efforts during the current year. However, a waiver is not the same thing as a clean bill of health on the issue. The presidential certification coincides with the State Department's annual report on international narcotics control strategy. It emphasizes the fact that despite counter-narcotics achievements, there were serious shortcomings in the current drive and much remains to be done to eliminate the menace. Poppy cultivation in Pakistan dropped to 6,950 hectares in 1995 from 7,270 hectares in the previous year. A number of major traffickers have been arrested and assets of some notorious figures frozen. There have been seizures and raids against drug processing facilities in Khyber agency. In spite of all this, Pakistan is an important producer of, and a major conduit for, drugs destined for the international market.

Evidence suggests that poppy cultivation is recurring in some previously cleared districts and that heroin laboratories still operate in inaccessible parts of the tribal areas. Additional opium from Afghanistan is transported into the NWFP [Northwest Frontier Province] where, along with locally grown opium, it is processed into heroin for local and foreign markets. The situation highlights serious difficulties and problems in enforcing anti-narcotics laws. Earlier, the International Narcotics Control Board took the Pakistan Government to task for failing to implement its anti-drug laws properly by punishing the traffickers. It urged the government to accord the highest priority to implementing regulations in the tribal areas where these laws were not being enforced and where cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking continued. Although raids were conducted against narcotics refining centers last year in January, there have been few raids since then.

Influential traffickers, the U.S. report said, were able to drag out the judicial process to their advantage. Rigorous implementation of drug laws is necessary not only to improve the country's tarnished image abroad. A more important consideration is to eliminate a pervasive evil ruining the country's economy and millions of its people. Enforcement is particularly important because of the unstable situation in Afghanistan and the porous nature of the border with that country. Drug addiction in the country is rising at the rate of seven percent annually, affecting all segments of society, particularly the youth. The number of heroin addicts has soared to 1.5 million and three million are said to be addicted to one kind of drug or another.

Pakistan must remove inadequacies in prevention and control measures and check the high relapse rate among cured addicts. Besides gearing up enforcement, coordination among the different enforcement agencies must be improve. For a decisive breakthrough in the campaign against production, processing and marketing of deadly drugs, the punch must be aimed at the narco-barons and their patrons and protectors rather than their minions who can be sorted out once the big fish has been netted in and held to account.

Pakistan: Indian Intelligence Blames CIA for Separatist Movements

BK0403143996 Karachi AMN in Urdu 21 Feb 96 p 4

[AMN NEWS Report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad — The Indian Government has taken strong note of the increasing contacts

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between the U.S. CIA and the Kashmiri freedom fighters in recent days and has alerted its secret agencies and security forces, saying the CIA has not only penetrated the ranks of freedom fighters in Kashmir but also started activities in far-flung states, like Kerala, Karnataka, and other places. The Research and Analysis Wing [RAW], India's most powerful intelligence agency, has had little success in dealing with the separatist movements currently raging in Manipur and Tripura in the northeast, Tamil Nadu in the south, and Punjab and Kashmir in the northwestern part of the country. That is why RAW came under intense pressure from the policymakers in the Central Government. They are not satisfied with RAW's performance. The policymakers have also rejected RAW's explanation that it has failed in its activities because of interference from the foreign secret agencies. Former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, Bombay bomb blasts, former Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh's assassination, and the dropping of arms in the Puruliya region of West Bengal are recent examples of RAW's failure.

It has also been learned that in the wake of its failure to convince central policymakers that Pakistan was behind every incident in India, RAW presented, in a report, the U.S. CIA as an invisible secret force behind all activities and incidents occurring in India. RAW prepared this report after Indian Home Minister S.B. Chavan made various accusations against the United States.

RAW's latest report also contains a lot of material regarding the CIA's economic and industrial espionage activities in the Indian capital, New Delhi. Certain top Indian politicians think that RAW should halt its subversive activities against India's smaller neighbors and devote more attention to domestic affairs to safeguard India's security and territorial integrity. It is now being said that India's territorial integrity is like a sinking ship that will sink in the near future under the weight of the extra load it has itself taken on its back.

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